

# SPAIN GOURMETOUR

Food, Wine & Travel Magazine



When  
Gourmands Fall  
for the Can

Pedro Ximénez.  
The Most  
Versatile Grape  
of All?

Baby  
Vegetables  
or Why Size  
Matters

Tasting Tapas  
in Madrid

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Editor-in-chief  
Cathy Boitrac

PX. No, not a secret code but one of Spain's most prestigious wines, made in Andalusia since the 16th century. Albert Adria suggests surprising things to do with this marvelous wine. How does a PX trap-pé sound for this summer? And there's more expert advice. We've asked specialists and connoisseurs of Spanish wines from their principal markets all over the world to share their top selections with us. Baudoin Havaux, director of the Brussels 'Mondial', the international wines and spirits competition, launches our series. Some of his favorites would go well with the mini-vegetables being produced in Murcia, or some of the gourmet preserves featured in this issue. Preserved foods command huge respect in Spain. Surprised? Read on. You've done Seville, now join us for our latest tapas tour, which this time takes us to Madrid, where the tapas range from traditional classics to cutting edge. And to round things off, a stay at two hotel-bodegas in the heart of Ribera del Duero and a visit to the art nouveau wineries of Catalonia.

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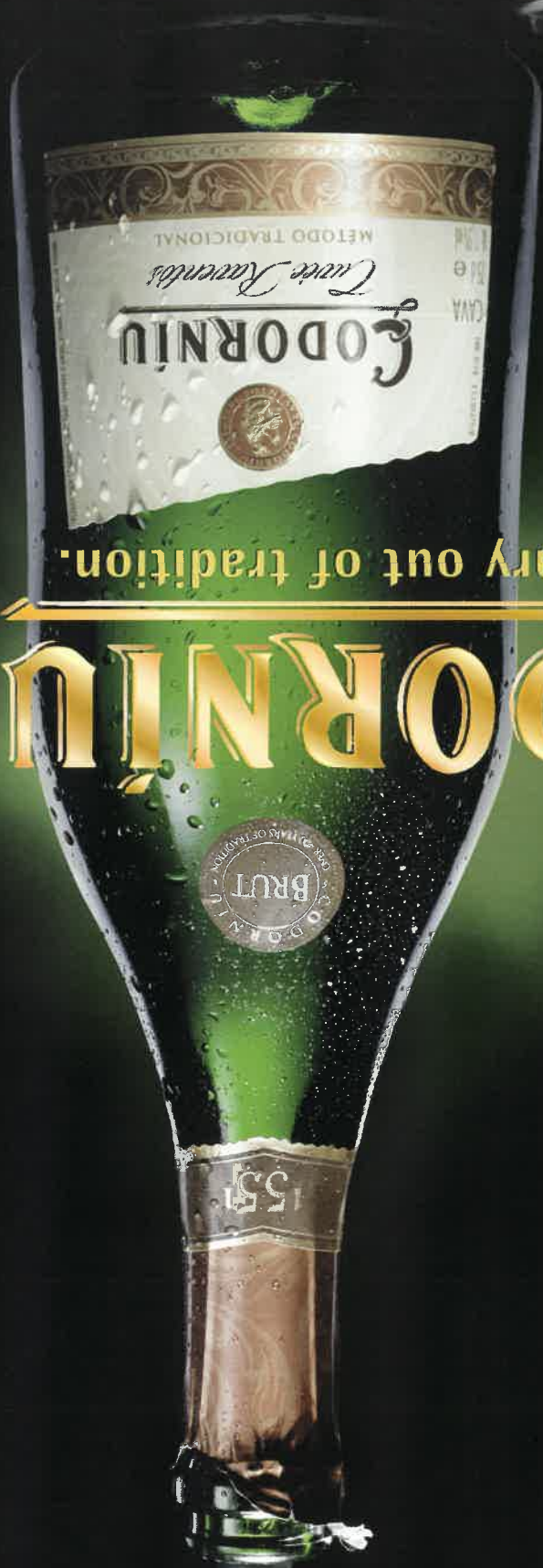
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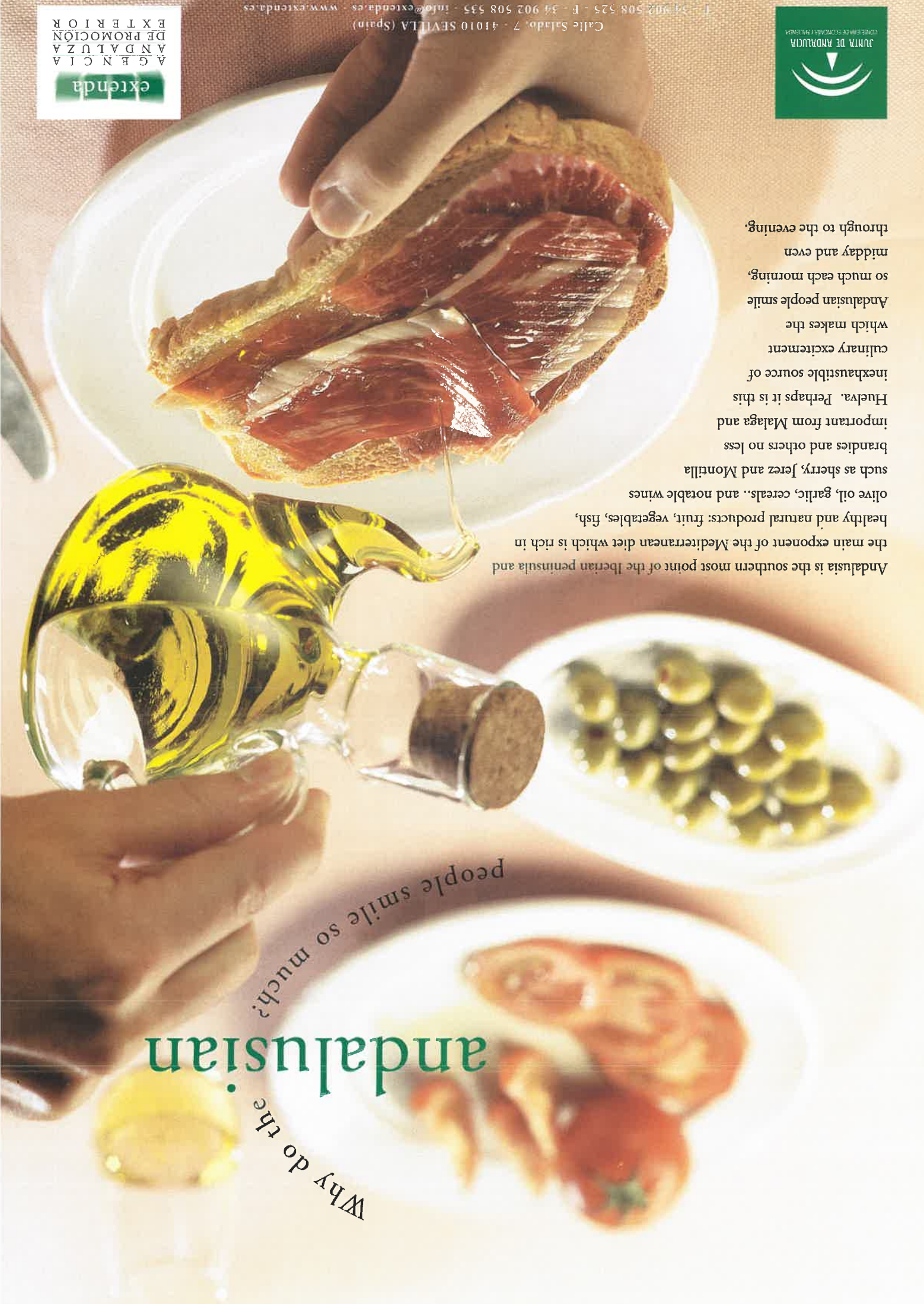


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Andalusia is the southern most point of the Iberian peninsula and the main exponent of the Mediterranean diet which is rich in healthy and natural products: fruit, vegetables, fish, olive oil, garlic, cereals, and notable wines such as sherry, Jerez and Montilla brandies and others no less important from Malaga and Huelva. Perhaps it is this inexhaustible source of culinary excitement which makes the Andalusian people smile so much each morning, midday and even through to the evening.

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# PRESERVES

When Gourmands  
Fall for the Can

We all know that opening a can is one of the quickest meal solutions; but only some of us know that it can also be one of the most delicious. There's no denying the prejudice against canned and bottled foodstuffs that exists among the gourmet fraternity... except, that is, in Spain. Ever since Nicolas Appert opened up a whole new way of preserving food in the early 19th century, a fair proportion of the best things we grow, fish or hunt in Spain has gone straight into the can or jar. What started as a domestic activity has given rise over time to a thriving canning industry, many of whose component companies still retain a semi-artisanal character. With the right know-how, anything—or nearly anything—can be preserved. What follows is a presentation of just a small sample of products from Spain's huge store-cupboard, and an introduction to a small selection of companies known for their outstanding quality. From the sea, we bring you: *bonito del norte* (white tuna or albacore), tuna, mussels, flavor-charged anchovies, cockles, clams... in oil, au naturel and marinated in *escabeche*. And from the land: asparagus and *Piquillo* peppers.

To round things off, some top chefs share their simple but delicious recipe hints for preserved fish and vegetables. Still ashamed of your can-opener?

With the notable exceptions of caviar and foie gras, everywhere in the world—except, of course, in Spain—canned food is the resort of newlyweds, divorcees and kids who have just left home. It is for culinary incompetents, an emergency mea- sure for times of crisis, something that tourists, soldiers and explorers carry in their survival kit. A can on the table is the sign of a person who can't cook, or won't cook. It is something depressing, like chili beans. It is gastronomic anti-matter. Any foodie will assure you that her- rings à la crème, sauerkraut, green beans, soup or sauce served up by even the lowest form of bistro will be a hundred times better than the best equivalents out of a can. In Spain, however, preserved foodstuffs are not second-best alternatives to cooking but gastronomic entities in their own right. *Mejillones en escabeche* (marinated mussels), *berberechos al ajillo* (cockles dressed with chopped gar- lic), *navajas al natural* (razor clams au naturel), *ventresca de bonito en aceite de oliva* (tuna belly in olive oil), *espárragos* (asparagus), *alcaparras* (capers), *berenjenas en vinagre* (egg-

plant in vinegar), to give just a few examples, have no culinary equivalent in vinegary products. They are gastronomic products per se. Perhaps because we came late to the refrigerator—or is it just that we like to be different?—here in Spain we can or bottle the cream of our crops and the best of our catches. Be it shell- fish, fish, vegetables, fruit, even birds, when something is genuinely special we put it in a can or jar and keep it to impress family and friends with on a special occasion. "We'll open a nice can of clams," my father would say as a very rare event. This was really pushing the boat out and involved sacred ritual. Just the right amount of vinegar would be added to perk up the flavor, they had to be eaten with cocktail sticks (using a metal fork would have been sacrilegious) and there was even a pecking order to be observed—we all waited our turn to spear the juicy little delicacies, given a special and appealing shape by their tightly-packed months in the can. In Spain, canning and bottling food is considered to be a facet of haute cuisine. A freshly steamed mussel is

quite a different product from one that has spent months in escabeche marinade inside a can. A propos, true gourmets even consider the length of time a product has spent in can or bottle to be important. I can think of a couple of fellow enthusiasts willing and able to spend hours discussing whether a mussel is at its peak six or twenty months after canning. The same is true of asparagus, cockles, Piquillo peppers and partridge. Eating recently canned fillet of tuna would be another sacrilegious act: not until a year on does it achieve the proper silky texture created by the merging of the fish's own fat content with that of the olive oil, and the depth of flavor which can only develop within the confines of the can. You may find this hard to believe, but it's true. Top-quality asparagus is another good example: the 8/10 caliber Navarra PDO (see Glossary page 143) and kept for six to eight months present a complexity of flavor that the most sophisticated of chefs could never replicate with the fresh product.

TEXT  
PEPE IGLESÍAS  
& EDITORIAL TEAM

TRANSLATION  
HAWYS PRITCHARD

PHOTOS  
JUAN MANUEL SANZ/CEX



## Cantabrian Anchovies

Let's start with anchovies. This product beautifully exemplifies the phenomenon described above: not only is there a big price difference between fresh and canned anchovies (fresh ones—*boquerones*—cost around 3-4 euros a kilo; canned ones—*anchovas*—cost at least 60 euros a kilo) but there is also an astonishing difference in flavor and aroma between the two, so much so that many people find it hard to believe that the fresh and preserved versions are one and the same fish. This alchemy is achieved by a recipe that dates back to the late 19th century. An Italian by the name of Giovanni Vella Scallota, having heard it rumored that anchovies from the Bay of Biscay were of a quality far superior to those caught elsewhere, traveled to Santona (Cantabria) to try them for himself. Discovering that it was so, he experimented with ways of preserving them so as to be able to sell them on his home market. Initially, he kept them edible just

by salting, but gradually fine-tuned the process, first taking out the spine, main source of potential putrefaction, and then packing them in fat to protect them from contact with the air, that other arch enemy of food preserving. He also experimented with olive oil—used for preserving meat of all kinds since Antiquity—achieving such spectacular results that his recipe has remained the definitive one ever since. Today, we also know about the nutritional properties of anchovies: as oily fish, they are very rich in omega 3, a polyunsaturated fat which, boosted by the oleic acid in the olive oil, becomes a powerful medicine highly effective at lowering levels of 'bad' cholesterol (LDL) and triglycerides in the blood, main culprits responsible for heart attacks. But there's more to anchovies than that. Although anchovies are processed in many parts of the world, the top names (Ortiz, Aguirre, Don Bocar, San Filippo, Lolín...), the ones that cost three or four times as much as the others, are expensive with good reason. First of all, these companies are

The cockle, meanwhile, is a shellfish so humble that top Galician food writers never even deign to mention it, despite the fact that cockles are absolutely delicious when simply opened by placing on a very hot hotplate then dressed with a squirt of lemon juice or finely chopped garlic fried in oil. As a canned product, however, the cockle takes on true delicacy status. In fact, it can be a good introduction to the exciting world of gourmet preserves. Here's all you do: Buy a can containing a product covered by guarantee of origin (price is also a reliable indicator). Open the can—don't throw away the liquid—and add a few drops of vinegar. Some recommend lemon juice, but I don't agree with that: preserves need vinegar which, depending on the product and your own preference, can be cider, white wine, red wine or sherry (if you opt for this last, use it sparingly as it is very aromatic). From that moment on, dear reader, you will understand why we Spaniards feel as we do about our preserved foods, and the rest of this article will take on particular relevance. You will have qualified as a "hermetophagite"—an eater, nay a gourmet, of preserves.





## Conservas Aguirreola

This family-run company, founded in 1888 by José Antonio Aguirreola Laca, grandfather of the current proprietors, has been built up on the basis of its top-quality preserved, salted and marinated fish. Nineteen-ninety-two was a key year for this company: they decided to take the plunge and build a new factory in which to process tuna, leaving the anchovy side of the business in the old premises and thereby complying with EC health and safety requirements.

The company started off selling anchovies and white tuna from the Bay of Biscay, and these are still their mainstay, complemented by a smaller proportion of tuna and mackerel. Of all their products, the most successful are anchovies, both salted and in virgin olive oil, and bonito in olive oil, *cabeche marinade*, and *salsa catalana* (onion, tomato, pepper and almond sauce). Their annual production amounts to between 500 and 600 tons of unprocessed fish. The processed products are distributed mainly on the Spanish market though they do sell some to Italy. "The basis of our success over all these years has been staying with our artisanal processing methods. And our motto has always stayed the same: topmost quality", explain Aguirreola officials.

## Conservas Ortiz

In 1891, Bernardo Ortiz de Zárate, a businessman from Aya (Basque Country), established Conservas Ortiz in Ondarroa. Since that time, five generations of the same family have devoted themselves to the artisanal production of preserved fish. In the early days, the company made semi-preserves of white tuna in marinade which were sold in wooden containers in the landlocked Castilian plateau during the summer months. They later turned to processing salted anchovies, which found their principal market along the

## Conservas Hijos de Ramón Peña

José Peña Oubiña set up his little fish and seafood canning factory in Cambadors in 1920. Within a few years, it was to become one of the biggest in Galicia. His policy of embracing quality was the key to his success: "And we still adhere to the same principles three generations later. This applies to selecting the best fish and shellfish, José Peña Oubiña set up his little fish and seafood canning factory in Cambadors in 1920. Within a few years, it was to become one of the biggest in Galicia. His policy of embracing quality was the key to his success: "And we still adhere to the same principles three generations later. This applies to selecting the best fish and shellfish, resting period stretches to six months. ate flavor and aroma. For anchovies, this preserved product to develop its appropriate flavor and aroma. For anchovies, this packed by hand, and they are always al- the fish are cleaned, processed and del norte. For most of their end products, this Basque company catches its bonito one" slogan refers to the method by which the fish. Their "Caught with a rod, one by whole sequence, beginning with catching Ortiz watchword, and it encompasses the Artisanal processing has always been the New York, Sydney and Tokyo. sive food shops in Paris, London, Berlin, Ortiz products can now be found in exclud worldwide, to the extent that Conservas ture products. Their markets have expanded and Cantabrian anchovies are their signature products. The extent that Conservas through the various versions of white tuna *claro* (yellow fin) and prepared "recipes", chovies, *bonito del norte* (white tuna), *atún* process verde (mackerel). Cantabrian an- de la Barquera, Leketio, Ondorrea (the along the Cantabrian coast, at San Vicente ness, they now have four factories spread before. After over a century in the busi- Ortiz continued to make its preserves as many boats continued to use the same tra- board refrigeration equipment. Even so, tion and, later, the incorporation of on- saw fishing boats transformed by motoriza- as Italy, where they met with great success. Mediterranean and in other countries such

choosing the best qualified staff, using top raw materials and ingredients, and being rigorously painstaking in our artisanal processing. It also applies to our exclusive original recipes. To sum up, we've stuck to our principles on matters of style, tradition and delivering quality for over 80 years", a company spokesperson explained. They built their current factory in 1998, equipping it with cutting-edge technology and production techniques. In combination with their impeccable approach, this has earned them a Galicia Calidade quality seal and an ISO 9002:1994 international quality certificate, just two of its guarantees. "We try our utmost to safeguard and improve every detail of our production on a daily basis. We are always seeking out the best raw materials, which we then monitor and supervise rigorously until they reach the factory. We have the best buyers and fishermen, and we trawl the best fishing grounds and ports to find the finest sardines, the most flavorful squid, the best cockles and the most sought-after razor clams. Our products come in limited editions, and shellfish", they conclude. They market three product lines—Azul, Peñamar and Gourmet—which are bought by top restaurants and shops in 12 countries.



highly selective: quality control is so exhaustive that only the best boxes, the ones that come from the top of the boat and therefore contain the most recent catches, are bought for these prime preserves. For those of us who love the sea, seeing the fish-ling boats setting off for the anchovy grounds each spring is a thrilling sight. The boats are kept impeccably clean despite the frenetic activity of those two or three months, back and forth seeming more like floating operating theaters than artisan vessels, and each fish is handled with exquisite care. There can be few ports in the world where the catch is treated as carefully as in Spain, and in consequence the fish reach the factories where they are to be processed perfectly intact. I say "in Spain", as opposed to "in Cantabria" advisedly, for Catalonia is another source of superb anchovies. Known as "*anchovas de l'Escala*", these are an excellent product though, sadly, catches are declining progressively in that area. Next comes the processing: the backbone and head are removed and the fish are cleaned, again meticulously. They are then salted and left to ma-

ture for several months (around five, though this varies according to the manufacturer), then each fish is carefully washed again to remove the salt, then boned and cleaned by hand, even the tiniest bones being removed with blades, cloths or tweezers, so that the women working at these tasks look more like beauticians than fish processors. Next each anchovy's two fillets are either separated or left attached at the tail (in this configuration they are known as "butterfly anchovies"), and the fish are then carefully placed in receptacles of various types, such as glass jars, small 50 gr / 2 oz cans, or *panderetas* (round, deep cans) for the hospitality industry (these last are the best). The choice of oil is the next step. This is something you should look out for when shopping, for a product whose label describes it as being in "*aceite vegetal*" (vegetable oil) will be in a different league from one in "*aceite de oliva*" (olive oil) and the best of all will be in "*aceite de oliva virgen extra*" (extra virgin olive oil). Taking all that into account, one can understand what Spanish writer and humorist Enrique Jardiel Poncela (1901-1952) meant

when he declared that if the Czar had ever tasted an anchovy sandwich they would never have bothered to invent caviar. Santonja takes such pride in its local product that it marks the end of the anchovy season with a special *fiesta de la anchoa*, which involves a lot of anchovy sampling and also includes a competition to select the company responsible for the best product of the previous season. A good preserved anchovy should contain just enough salt, being neither aggressively salty nor insipid, should be meaty, with quite a chewy texture (though tastes vary on this point: in some regions they prefer a velvety texture), should still retain the sea smell of the original product, and be completely bone free. Of course, anchovies also come simply salted, presented in salt rather than oil. Bigger fish are usually kept for this type of presentation, and serious anchovy enthusiasts love them. One last piece of advice: anchovies are a semi-preserve, and should therefore be kept cold, at around 5°C / 41°F. If stored at ambient temperature, they spoil within a few weeks.



## Tuna

Another example of Spain's sophisticated approach to canning and bottling is the way we preserve *ventresca* (belly) of tuna and bonito. The *ventresca* is actually the muscular layer which contains the viscera of the fish. Completely separated from the entrails by the peritoneum, its function is simply to hold things in place. Given that this is all it has to do, it contains a high percentage of fat



## CHEFS &amp; CANS: ANTHONY MUSARRA - AUSTRALIA

these vegetables are also very good to batter very lightly, deep fry and serve with either *aioli* or tapenade. Baby broad beans in the can are sweet and tender and I like to process them into a fresh pesto with roasted almonds, basil, parmesan cheese and good olive oil. There are many other uses for the variety of Spanish gourmet preserves available. These products represent the dynamic food and agriculture industry of Spain and can be utilized and integrated with many other cuisines. I consider these products along with other Spanish produce such as olives, *pimentón* (a type of paprika from Spain) and extra virgin olive oil to be vital ingredients in the preparation of my food.

*Anthony Musarra is one of Australia's most renowned and respected chefs. As Chef at Park Hyatt Sydney, the hotel recently received the award for "Best Hotel for Food" by the readers of Travel & Leisure Magazine (2001, USA). Anthony has also been awarded in 2001, One Chef's Hat, by the Sydney Morning Herald Good Food Guide.*



as a topping for pizza or a thin tart and work well with Mediterranean flavors such as olives, capers, garlic and parsley. The one important thing to remember when using preserved shellfish is not to cook them for too long as they will toughen and become dry, so if using pasta or risotto, for example, add the shellfish in the final stages to just heat through. Preserved tuna can be flaked into a salad or is delicious blended through mayonnaise with a little wine vinegar to serve with poached veal or chicken breast. Spanish vegetable preserves have also provided me with great flavor options and versatility. The sweet and smoky *Piquillo* peppers are ideal to slice and mix with oil and vinegar as a dressing for roasted lamb or give a depth of flavor stirred into a soup or pasta dish. We use white asparagus and artichoke hearts (also from Navarra) to complement a simple antipasto platter, but

Since traveling through Spain and experiencing the magnificent variety of Spanish gourmet preserves, I am continually compelled to utilize this produce in my food. These products for me, capture the essence and soul of Spanish food—vibrant, delicious and versatile with a simplistic charm. The beauty of Spanish preserves is the fact that they are ready to use which makes them extremely easy to cook with without the need for lengthy preparation. Widely considered amongst the best in the world, the various fish preserves from Spain form the basis for many dishes. My favorite way of using anchovies in extra virgin olive oil is to serve them straight from the tin on toasted woodfired bread rubbed with fresh garlic topped with ripe sliced tomato, torn basil and fresh black pepper. The anchovies as well as the salted variety can also be used as a condiment for many preparations. Add some crushed anchovy fillets to softened butter with chopped fresh herbs and a little mustard to make a compound butter suitable for serving with grilled or roasted fish or meat, or add a few fillets finely chopped to a salsa verde or fresh tomato sauce to add a piquant character. Preserved mussels, cockles and clams can be used tossed with fresh pasta or

were discovered by US doctor Angel Keys during the Second World War. In the course of dissecting and operating on heart patients, he found that people of Mediterranean origin had dramatically lower cholesterol levels than those of Anglo-Saxon provenance. It is important to differentiate between the various species genetically referred to as tuna, a family which embraces dozens of varieties. Space prevents my going into too much zootechnical

terol", and is—as explained in the section on anchovies—the best resource for reducing levels of "bad cholesterol" and triglycerides. Albert empirically, this had been known for thousands of years, as demonstrated by Aristotle's account of Phoenicians sailing to Cadiz to capture these giant torpedo-like fish. All in all, the different varieties of tuna can be considered one of the mainstays of the much-vaunted Mediterranean Diet, whose benefits

which, as we all know, is what gives things flavor. For decades, even centuries, endocrinologists and nutritionists did their utmost to blight our lives by telling us that the fat contained in oily fish was the main cause of our high cholesterol levels. By today, advances in medicine have shown that not only is it not bad for us, it is actually good for us, being made up of high density lipoproteins (HDL), commonly known as "good choles-

## CHEFS & CANS : GABRIELLE HAMILTON - USA

Pump, meaty, pure white and silvery marinated anchovies, I now serve to guests at the restaurant with slivers of celery hearts and toasted Marcona almonds. But I have never found a need to dress them up. Those I still eat with my fingers, straight from the carton, alone in the pantry.

*Gabrielle Hamilton is the chef/owner of Prune which she opened in New York City's East Village in October 1999. She has written for Saveur Magazine and Food & Wine and had the 8 week Chef's Column in The New York Times. Her work has been anthologized in Best Food Writing 2001 and 2002.*

But the tastes you discover early are the ones you forever seek again. And I now use some canned products in my restaurant with unabashed fervor. It is not the convenience which attracts me as it did millions of housewives in the postwar era. Nor is it necessary to conserve products for the long winters as our ancestors did when now we have such unlimited access to all the growing climates of the globe. As a chef in New York City, I, like everyone else, can get almost anything fresh I want at any time of year. It's the taste of the tin I like. It appeals to me. The fat white asparagus stalks from a jar of salted water, with a pinch of iron in it to recreate the metallic flavor you associate with the childhood pantry, are delicious at room temperature with a small pool of nut-brown butter and a soft fried egg yolk and a few capers scattered across. The cardoons, dressed and preserved in the jar, add crunch and perfume to braised peas and butter lettuce with a little sherry vinegar reduction. The roasted *Piquillo* peppers traditionally stuffed with salt-cod also turn out to be the perfect home for beaten soft goat cheese, artichoke salad, white corn puree, or crabmeat.

For reasons that do not need to be explained in much detail, I spent a great deal of my childhood alone in our dry goods pantry rummaging for dinner. The stacked cans and jars and foil-wrapped packages with labels in languages I could not understand were equally fascinating and unsettling. To open a can of tuna belly in olive oil could alarm even the most stalwart and hungry small girl if she was expecting guava jelly or butterscotch pudding.



## CHEFS &amp; CANS: FRANCES BISSELL - U K



*Frances Bissell is a chef member of the Academy of Culinary Arts and a trustee of Allimentation. She has been guest chef in some of the world's leading hotels and restaurants all around the world. An award-winning writer, she is also much in demand as a lecturer and teacher.*

vegetable casserole, together with cooked, sliced waxy potatoes. Simply layer the three ingredients in an earthenware casserole (individual dishes can be used), interspersing a layer of chopped parsley and crushed spinach, topping with a layer of sliced fresh cheese. Several eggs are beaten and poured over the cheese and vegetables and the dish returned to the oven, for about ten minutes or so for the vegetables to heat through, the cheese to seep down into the vegetables, and the eggs to set.

**Cockles and mussels** enhance rice and pasta dishes, especially when these have been cooked in shellfish stock. Try them, too, piled into hollowed out and baked new potatoes, mixed with parsley and garlic cream or mayonnaise. Their sweet, tender briny quality is a perfect match for the earthy flavors and texture of pulses, so combine them with white beans in a salad, adding crisply cooked green beans for crunch and contrast.

I like to use **anchovies** in the same way as bacon, to add a sharp salty note where needed. For example, lard a monkfish tail, salmon steaks or a leg of lamb with strips of anchovy first rolled in finely chopped herbs. The flavor permeates the fish or meat, seasoning it gently.

**White tuna** is excellent in all recipes where you might otherwise use cooked fish—kedgeree, omelets, soufflés, fish cakes, stuffed tomatoes. And, of course, it makes the ultimate tuna salad, with the best mayonnaise, chopped celery, chopped mild onions or spring onions, in a sandwich or piled in Little Gem lettuce leaves for a *tapa* or first course.

I had always assumed fresh was best until I was served, with a flourish, canned white Spanish asparagus in Egana Oriza in Seville many years ago. Since then, I have been a convert, always bring it back from Spain with me, as well as hunting out supplies of *Piquillo* peppers, and other preserved vegetables. Visiting Navarra late last year to see the preparation of these products, as well as the canned tuna and anchovy industry on the Basque coast convinced me of their quality and the artisanal nature of the production. Here are some of the ways I like to use these prime ingredients.

**Pimientos del Piquillo:** Make a fresh prawn and potato salad, diced quite small and mixed with a creamy, well-made mayonnaise flavored with chopped fresh mint, and use this to stuff the pimientos for a cold first course, *tapa* or salad component. For a hot dish, mix cooked, un-dyed smoked haddock with freshly boiled and mashed potatoes, plenty of chopped parsley or chives, stuff the pimientos, spoon a creamy, light béchamel over them and finish under the salamander or in a hot oven. **White asparagus:** Serve with a dressing of extra virgin olive oil, freshly squeezed orange juice, and finely chopped fresh mint. It is tempting to serve a garlicky mayonnaise or aioli but this overpowers the subtle flavors of the asparagus. A better choice is mayonnaise flavored with chervil or parsley. Fava beans and artichoke hearts can be combined in the most delicious





the so-called "mass effect": the greater the mass that undergoes sterilization, the less the product suffers in the process.

## Shellfish from Galicia

Galicia, in the north west of the Iberian Peninsula, is seafood heaven. The waters of the fjord-like Rias Bayas are not only of extreme quality, but are also rich in phytoplankton, giving the mollusks that feed on them better flavor than those from other waters. The right species are also found there; this is an important point, for there are such enormous organoleptic differences between one type of clam and another—the so-called "*almeja fina*" is nothing like the coarser "*almeja babosa*", to say nothing of tropical or southern hemisphere species—that, if you tasted them with your eyes closed, you would think that you were eating two entirely different creatures. However, it is perhaps the processes of collection and canning that make the most dramatic differences to the product. In Galicia, clams and cockles are gathered one by one by women known as *mariscadoras*, who pick only those of a suitable size and

the water surface preventing them from seeing that they are awaited by a row of fishermen wielding pneumatic rods, which automatically reel in the fish at high speed. Behind each fisherman is another who collects the fish, renews the bait and rapidly dispatches the caught fish. This quick death causes the blood to concentrate in the central circulatory system, so that what is known as *sangacho* (the dark mass which makes tuna flesh look unsightly and spoils its flavor and texture) is kept to a minimum and around the central spine. This rapid fishing method also avoids the rough handling and resultant damage that net fishing involves, and explains the supremely good texture and quality of loin and belly cuts of rod-caught bonito del norte. When the fish reaches the factory, the head, tail and belly are cut off. The trunk is boiled whole with a little salt, then it is canned or bottled with best quality oil and "laid down" for a period of time. Some companies, Ortiz being one example, have recently launched a "magnum" jar of tuna, containing over 2 kg / 4.5 lb and matured for two years in the bodega. Marvelous stuff. It is an interesting fact that, as with wine, the bigger the receptacle, the better the contents develop. The reason lies in

detail, and anyway few cans or jars specify whether they contain northern blue fin (*Thunnus thynnus*), yellow fin (*Thunnus albacares*) or skipjack (*Katsuwonus pelamis*). My best advice to you is to look for brands (Ortiz, El Consorcio, La Barbatena...) which offer some sort of guarantee that the preserved product is genuine bonito del norte (white tuna), or *atún de almadraba* (tuna trapped in the maze of nets planted on their route from the North Atlantic to the Mediterranean). Both are completely different—though equally delicious—products, and both are processed in different, artisanal ways, using olive oil in both cases. Bonito del norte at its best is rod-caught. Believe it or not, the top canners use tuna caught in this way, just as in the old days but for the fact that the modern rods are pneumatically assisted. The process is as simple—or complicated—as this: at the start of the tuna season, which lasts from July to October, the boats go to sea loaded up with large tanks of live bait, usually anchovies. Once a school of tuna has been located, the boat stops over it and clouds the surface of the water by scattering it with sawdust or directing high pressure jets of water at it, while simultaneously throwing in live bait. The voracious tuna rise rapidly to the surface after the food, the opacity of

## P R E S E R V E D V E G E T A B L E P R O D U C E S

at the right times of year (namely, not during the reproduction season when not only is it illegal, but their meat loses all its fat and becomes insipid and flabby). The shellfish are then depurated, both for health and safety reasons and to remove all traces of sand from within the shell. They are removed from their shells by steaming and are then placed in cans—both of these are precision processes. All in all, when we open a

can of clams or cockles, we can be confident that its contents have been handled with all the respect of caviar. Mussels are another case where olive oil is used in their marinade, both for the health-giving properties mentioned earlier and for the unbeatable flavor and aroma this combination produces. When shopping, be sure to ascertain the caliber of what the can or jar contains: within

the same quality category, a can may contain 6/8 or 12/16 units, the price of the former being up to twice as much as the latter. Larger caliber units are always more expensive than smaller ones because they are fleshier, and are more impressive when served. Companies such as Ramón Peña and Los Repetres produce the best shellfish from this region, and also offer the best range of recipes.

**Conservas El Navarrico**  
In 1960, José Salcedo Sorria set up a little factory on the ground floor of his house, in San Adrián (Navarre) sealing jars of preserves for individuals. Helped by his wife, Amalia Herce, and three other ladies, he provided a service for neighbors who bottled their own asparagus. Three years later, he moved along the street to 31 calle La Ribera and doubled the size of his plant. The big leap came in 1975 when, with his three sons involved in the business, the factory was expanded by 1,000 sq m / 10,700 sq ft, and they started selling their own products under the registered brand name of El Navarrico. Their current catalogue contains 23 products, five of which are covered by designations of quality: *espárrago de Navarra* (Navarra asparagus: this is one of the few companies in Navarre whose complete production of asparagus is labeled exclusively under the *espárrago de Navarra* PDO), *pimiento del Piquillo de Lodosa* (Lodosa piquillo peppers), *alcachofa de Tudela* (Tudela artichokes), *Agricultura Ecológica* (Organic Farming), and *Productos Artesanos de Navarra* (Artisan Products of Navarra). The factory also processes fried baby



broad beans in olive oil, cardoon, leeks, *menestra* (vegetable medley) and many other products. Eighty-five percent of El Navarrico's production is sold on the Spanish market and the rest is exported mainly to Britain, the USA and France, though they do also sell to Australia, Andorra, Panama, Japan and Hong Kong.

**Conservas Pedro Luis**  
This family firm was founded in Lodosa in 1988, with two fundamental tenets: service and product quality. The results of these principles have earned them various awards and honorable mentions: first prize for Lodosa Piquillo peppers in the II Concurso de Sociedades Gastronómicas de Euskadi (Second Basque Gastronomic Societies' Competition); first prize for protected designation of origin peppers; awarded by *Vino y Gastronomía* magazine; many references in Rafael García Santos' book *Lo Mejor de la Gastronomía Española* (The Best of Spanish Gastronomy). The company started off preserving Lodosa Piquillo peppers and Navarra asparagus, both of which are now guaranteed by PDO. Over time, Pedro Luis made further investments to keep pace with market demand, gradually updating and replacing their plant, and complying rigorously with the most demanding health and safety regulations while retaining their traditional artisanal approach. "To enable us to compete in a marketplace as demanding as the current one, the company has always made a point of adopting the most demanding quality control systems. Our aim this year is to get UNCE-EN ISO 9001: 2000 certification", they explain. They have also expanded their product





**Conservas Rosara**

Conservas Rosara is right in the heart of Navarra's Ribera, on the banks of the River Ebro. The company was founded in 1986 and its aim has always been to provide good quality, in the sense not only of dealing in products of recognized prestige and with PDO (Navarra asparagus, Lodosa Piquillo peppers, Tudela artichokes) but also of treating those products in the painstaking way that the term "artisan" implies: peeling by hand, canning and bottling without preservatives or colorants, wood-fire roasting, and so on.

Its efforts to achieve top quality in all its products (of which there are currently 130) have won this company several awards. "Selecting the best fresh produce (most of them PDO covered) isn't enough on its own; you also have to process them in the artisanal way, always aiming for the best results and not stinting either money or effort. On top of that, we are constantly researching new products and recipes, some faithful recreations of traditional ones, and others created in our own kitchens", explains Rosara. This company's artisanal way of doing things, avoiding all additives to preserve authenticity of flavor, pays dividends in its products.



range, which currently includes Tudela artichokes, a PDO, and organically farmed products—a line on which they are concentrating heavily at the moment. Another special feature of this company is the fact that its production is seasonal: "We harvest the vegetables at a particular time of year and when the crop is finished, that's it".

## WEB SITES

**Gourmet Preserves****www.conservaenlata.com**

This is the web site of the Canning Information Center, CICA. It provides information about the history of preserving and canning, recipes, health and nutrition, gourmet preserves and has a FAQ section. It also has a collection of press references to preserved foods. (Spanish)

**Preserved fish****www.chramonpena.com**

Conservas Hijos de Ramón Peña's site gives information about the company's history, fishing seasons and products. (Spanish)

**www.conservasortiz.com**

Conservas Ortiz's site tells you all about the company and its products. (English, French, Italian, Spanish)

**Preserved vegetables****www.navarrico.com**

El Navarrico's web site includes information about the company's products and how they are grown. (Spanish)

**www.conservaspedroluis.com**

Conservas Pedro Luis's web site gives background information about the company, its products, quality policy and recipes. (Basque, English, French, German, Spanish)

**www.rosara.com**

Conservas Rosara's site describes the manufacturing process behind its products, distribution channels and recipes. (English, Spanish)

Market Garden  
in a Jar

So far, we have been concerned with fish and shellfish, but there is as much to say again about our fruits

and vegetables.

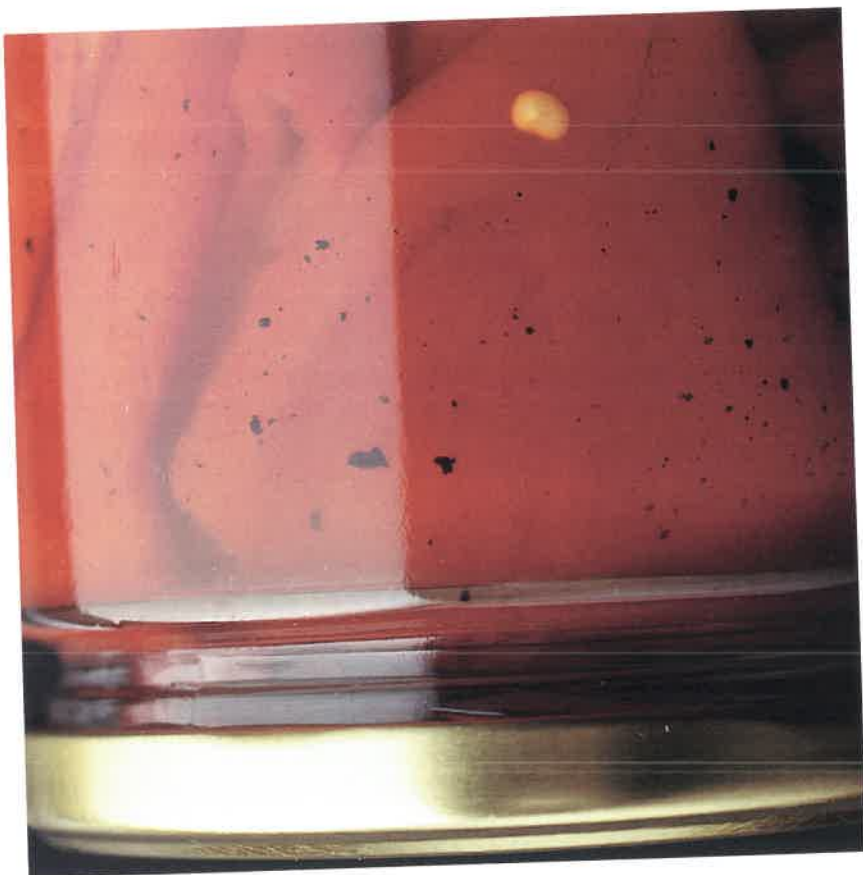
In Spain, there are certain vegetables that would never have gained currency had it not been for the invention of canning and bottling. Piquillo

peppers are a case in point: in their natural state they are virtually inedible, but preserving transforms them into something sweet, silky and fragrant, with a little zing of piquancy and a complexity of flavor... so delicate, in fact, that one is often tempted to ignore the chop on one's plate and concentrate on what is supposed to be the garnish.

Asparagus is another example. Louis XIV, the Sun King, is said to have launched the world-wide appetite for

asparagus—when it comes to food, the French always claim the best things as their own. It is known, however, that asparagus was eaten at the finest tables of Ancient Greece and Rome and its gastronomic virtues and medicinal properties were described by Pliny, writing two thousand years ago.

In Spain, asparagus eating was always deemed a sign of distinction, by the Arabs, Mozarabs and Jews in the 8th–15th centuries and in the subsequent courts of the Christian monarchs. In his *Banquete de nobles caballeros* (Banquet of Noble Knights) Don Luis Lobera of Avila, doctor to Emperor Charles V, says of asparagus: "According to Galen in the second *De Cibis*, these are of little substance. They are diuretics, which clear obstructions of the liver, bowel and kidneys and other organs". Medical considerations aside, the almost alarmingly large asparagus that







the Spanish love so much are actually very delicate in texture and flavor. Eaten with a good virgin olive oil mayonnaise or a home made vinaigrette, they are both delicious and extremely simple to get onto the table.

I could go on and on about our many preserved vegetables, and delights such as *habichas* (tiny broad beans) and *alcachofas* (artichokes), for Spain has large, highly productive fertile areas given over to vegetable and fruit growing, known as *huertas*. But perhaps your best introduction to what comes out of the *huertas* of, say, Navarra, Murcia and La Rioja, would be to call in at a good tapas bar in any part of Spain and taste these delicatessen items for yourself. Bars tend to vie with each other to serve the best brands on the market or come up with an artisanal product that no-one else knows about. The quality will certainly be a

*Pepe Iglesias is a journalist, contributor to various food magazines, and author of the Guia Gastronómica de Asturias (Gastronomic Guide to Asturias).*

*Recipes page 93, Exporters page 116, Photo Credits page 144*

Ribera del Duero

# VINTYARDS

A Backdrop of

Bodegas  
& Hotels  
Part 2





Ribera del Duero may not be one of Spain's major tourist destinations, but its name is known to wine lovers all over the world. In fact, more and more foreign visitors are actually going there, eager to explore the area famous for its deep red wines with complex aromas and punchy flavor. This second part of our series has a distinctly medieval tone, taking in castles, palaces and churches, but bars, cheap restaurants and underground wine cellars, too. We visit an area whose rich heritage of historic buildings, both monumental and popular, is redolent of Castile's history. When not on the road, we stay at two welcoming, comfortable bodegas which have their own hotels: Arzuaga Navarro, in Quintanilla de Onésimo (Valladolid) and Torremilanos, in Aranda del Duero (Burgos)—modern accommodation within thick stone walls against a backdrop of vineyards.

**Text and Photos**  
Carlos Tejero/ICEX

**Translation**  
Hawys Pritchard



Top: Detail of the wine tasting room at Bodegas Torremilanos  
Bottom: Bodegas Arzuaga; main entrance to the hotel

The town of Sepúlveda (Segovia) en route to the Duero valley



The vines are virtually leafless at this time of year. We've taken the A-1 (the North Highway) out of Madrid. It's the middle of May, the perfect time of year for a trip as long as the gods are on your side. We drive through a landscape in which fields of spring wheat are ablaze with poppies, sheep graze peacefully and goldfinches warble in the reeds. Unfortunately, this idyll is short-lived. From the So-moserra Pass, high in the mountains, it becomes obvious that the god of

bad weather is planning to make his presence felt today: dark clouds lie on the horizon like a layer of asphalt. We turn off for Sepúlveda. This old town is strategically sited on two hills, overlooking the winding course of the river Duratón which carves its way for 25 km / 78 miles through Segovia's high moorland, creating gorges up to 100 m / 330 ft deep as it goes. The gorges are riddled with caves, used as refuges by hunters, hermits, witches and bandits

throughout history but still surprisingly well preserved and some even with surviving cave paintings. The highest caves in this spectacular karstic formation are used as nesting sites by the areas many birds of prey. The gorges constitute one of Spain's griffon vulture sanctuaries and are home to a colony of nearly 500 pairs of these carrion-eaters, the biggest birds in Europe with a wing-span of up to 2.8 m / 9 ft. A bird of these glider-like proportions is an awe-



# CHEF FERMIN: ICONOCLAST IN HIS OWN LAND

Fermin Salinero's restaurant doesn't look particularly special; it's just another business among the many installed at ground floor level beneath a block of flats on the outskirts of Aranda. Perhaps for this very reason, he has chosen to cook the sort of food he likes rather than what he might have been expected to cook had his restaurant been in the old quarter of town. "People around here are very prejudiced against creative cooking," complains Fermin. "And of course 90% of visitors come to this part of Spain to eat lamb, *lechazo* on the menu." That being the case, you have to take your hat off to anyone who has managed to keep going for 20 years providing food quite unlike anything else around.

Fermin was trained in Les Landes, France ("I called the restaurant Chez rather than 'Chez because no-one knew what that meant' he explains). His enthusiasm for duck dates back to his time there. While other restaurants in town hold special *lechazo* days, Fermin organizes *Jornadas del Pato* (Duck Days) every April-May, and another season of what he calls *Jornadas Buscasetas* (Mushroom Foray Days) in October-November, offering an interesting mycological menu for 32 euros.

Fermin's cooking—duck *crêpes* with pigs' trotters (*crêpes de pato con manitas de cerdo*), *picanón*—a type of small chicken—with crayfish (*picañón con cangrifos*), medallions of cured foie gras with spring onions (*medallones de foie curado con cebollitas*)—injects a cosmopolitan shot into the Ribera's otherwise static culinary arm, and provides a welcome alternative for people who want a change from the standard field leaders.

Fermin's 28-year-old son, Luis, has inherited his father's love of cooking and currently works at the luxury Son Net Hotel in Delia, Mallorca, where he is finishing his training after studying at Barcelona's Escuela de Hostelería followed by spells in the family restaurant and at Michelin star holders such as Madrid's Zalacaín, Barcelona's Nè-hel and Palma de Mallorca's Koldo Foyo.

inspiring sight in the sky, casting its enormous shadow on the roofs of Sepúlveda below. The town itself is beautifully preserved and well worth a visit. Its Main Square is presided over by the remains of the castle built a thousand years ago by Fernán González, Count of Castile; the town walls still retain five of their original seven gates; and it has five Romanesque churches, the star of which is the sanctuary of the Virgen de la Peña. Sepúlveda is the sort of place where everyone is on a first-name basis and conversations are short and to the point (Castilians are notoriously taciturn): "Hello Secundina. Off to get bread?", "Hello Germañ, it'll rain later", answers the woman, pointing up at the lowering black clouds.

We leave Sepúlveda for Peñaflor, whose spindle-shaped castle stands like a watchtower on the River Duero, then take the Valladolid road, which runs parallel to the river. About 16 km / 10 miles further on we spot our first destination just before Quintanilla de Onésimo. Its raining heavily now, and a blustery wind has got up. Springtime seems to have been ousted by cold weather.

The Arzuaga Navarro winery buildings stand right by the road, a U-shaped complex built in 1995. Stone quarried on the estate itself creates its overall visual effect—viewed head on, it looks like a monastery, with its long porticoed gallery and a bellry crowning the central building. Access to the hotel is round the side. Inside the entrance hall, the main

## Bodegas Arzuaga Navarro



door is flanked by two enormous bronze lions (one of the two symbols of this Autonomous Community, Castile-León). A broad staircase with sturdy elm-wood banisters leads to the upper storey, which is where the guest rooms are. The carpet in corridors and guest rooms is wine-colored and patterned with the name and logo of the bodega. The hotel has 24 rooms, though by the time you read this it will have 19 more. Of these, four are suites, two are junior suites and the rest are doubles. On the whole, the rooms are generously proportioned and are furnished with writing tables, chairs and beds of traditional design made in good woods. Guests are provided with a basket of fruit and a bottle of Arzuaga Crianza 2000 with the compliments of the management. All rooms have TV and a (silent) minibar, and the bathrooms are large and fitted with whirlpool baths. Entering the building by the main door, you find yourself in an enormous, wooden-ceilinged "lounge", which actually contains the bar, kitchens and restaurant. There is also a little shop selling wines from the bodega and other Arzuaga products (such as extra virgin olive oil, produced in the Toledo hills). Leading off this huge lounge, which is equipped to cater for big banquets and conventions, are private rooms for small groups, corporate meetings and the like. A residents' restaurant has been created in part of the portico, separated from the big main lounge and protected from the elements by heavy-duty glass. The menu concentrates on traditional local specialties, plus a few Basque-influenced dishes such as T-bone steak and cod in green sauce.





local wineries, or go shopping in Valladolid, or hold a business convention. We organize the visits, suggest places of interest and do whatever's necessary to meet our guests' requirements".

## WEBSITES

**www.villadesepulveda.org**

Sepulveda local authority's official web site.

Information includes art, history, tourism

and so on. Plenty of pictures. Special section on the Duración gorges. (Spanish)

**www.museodelvinodelvaldadolid.es**

Web site of the Provincial Wine Museum,

whose HQ is in Peñafiel castle. This beautifuly designed site provides general information (location, opening times, ticket prices...) and a very comprehensive virtual shop selling wines from the region.

(English, French, Spanish)

**www.lariberadelduro.com**

Information about tourist routes, bodegas,

accommodation in the countryside. Also offers a company search facility. (Spanish)

**www.terra.es/personal/lagarisilla**

Web site of El Lagar de Isilla, the mesón-style restaurant with its own vineyards

which produce 75,000 bottles of young, crianza and reserva wines (see Glossary

page 143). (Spanish)

**www.ava.es**

Valladolid local authority's official web

site gives listings and a guide to the

city, with pictures. (Spanish)

**www.ayaranda.es**

Aranda local authority's official web site

gives wide-ranging information about

the town itself and a lot about local

wine and food. (Spanish)

**www.turismopenafiel.com**

Peñafiel local authority's tourist information site. (Spanish)

**Tourism**

this site. (English, Spanish)

Bodegas Peñalba López, proprietors of

the Torremillanos estate, provide information about both winery and hotel on

this site. (English, Spanish)

**www.torremillanos.com**

Bodegas Arzuaga Navarero's site includes a section about the hotel.

(English, Spanish)

**Bodegas**

**www.arzuaganavarero.com**

Regulatory Council. (Spanish)

**www.riberadelduro.es**

Web site of Ribera del Duero DO's

Designation of Origin (DO)

Needless to say, *vinos de la casa* accompany all these.

The restaurant overlooks the N-122,

an extremely busy road that links So-

ria with Valladolid, on the other side

of which lies a narrow plot planted

with goblet-pruned vines, also

owned by the bodega. It has to be

said that the view is not exactly bu-

colic, but there is a certain enjoy-

ment to be derived from the passing

traffic: "*Fernandez, pasión lapicera*"

("a passion for upholstery") declares

the slogan on a passing van. The

moving spectacle will soon be joined

by a vintage train which is to run be-

tween Valladolid and Peñafiel, bring-

ing back into use the long-aban-

doned track that runs parallel to the

road. Wine will be served on the

train, in a scheme rather like the *Tren*

*de la Fresa* that runs between Madrid

and Aranjuez on board which straw-

berries are served. Bodegas Arzuaga

Navarro is situated within what

might be called the Ribera's "Golden

Mill". Its land borders with the Vega

Siçilia estate to the east; to the north,

across the river, are Bodegas Mauro

and, almost opposite, *Vitla Mayor*. A

wheat field lies to the west at pre-

sent, but it seems that its days as

such are numbered: the Arco Group

(Bodegas Berberana, Marques de

Griñón, etc.) has bought the farm

with a view to building a winery

and, probably, a hotel.

Gustavo Calvo, head of PR for the

bodega-hotel, is a skilful host. He

knows his customers and knows

how to keep them happy, whether

he's dealing with a rich Mexican

landowner (Mexico is one of this

winery's main markets) or a group of

executives with wine matters to dis-

cuss. "They may want to visit other

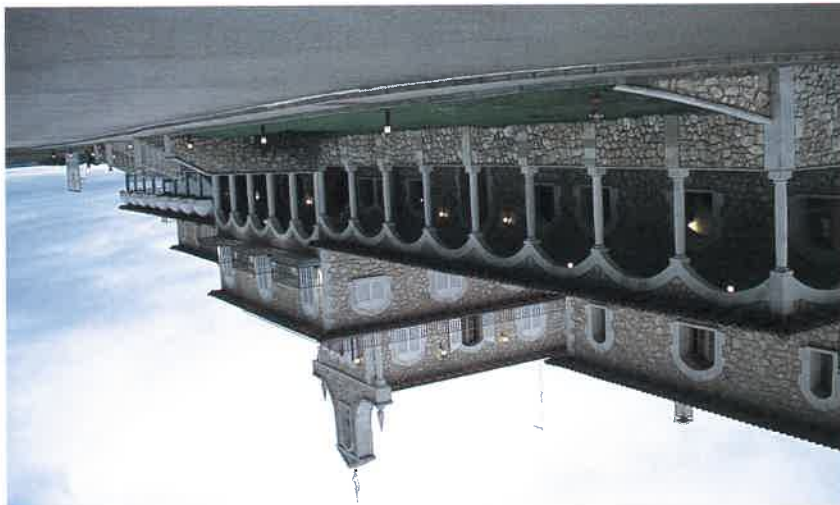




An ancient evergreen oak on the La Plania estate

Country's Guipúzcoa), Florentino married María Luisa Navarro, whose family owned a knitwear factory in Lerma (Burgos) where, incidentally, their daughter famous knitwear designer, was born and brought up. With Ribera del Duero not far away, Florentino became interested in wine, to the extent of buying two farms—La Plania and Quintanilla—in the early 1980s, the latter being where he built his winery in 1993.

Gustavo shows us assiduously round the premises, from the bodega in the true sense of the word—the cellar, with its 2,000 French and American oak casks—to the ceremonial tasting hall, upstairs in the main building. We are also introduced to the approachable and enterprising proprietor, Florentino Arzuaga. Born in a part of Spain not exactly known for winegrowing (Azpeitia, in the Basque



As Gustavo explains: "The hotel idea came about after we did up some rooms just to accommodate winery customers. But word got around, and demand got bigger and bigger". They decided to expand, and the hotel was launched at the end of 2001. A few months later the whole Real Madrid soccer team stayed there, giving the venture a definitive boost. The La Plania estate, where Bodegas Arzuaga Navarro has 75 ha / 185 acres more vineyard—in addition, that is, to Quintanilla's 65 ha / 160 acres—is situated not far away, on a hillside some 900 m / 3,000 ft up, its territory typically populated by ilex, oak and pine. The estate, which covers some 1,400 ha / 3,500 acres in all, provides a habitat for hundreds of wild boar, deer (the bodega logo incorporates a deer) and mouflon (wild mountain sheep). Within this nature reserve, the Arzuaga family has a house with summerhouse and underground wine cellar for their own use. Gustavo informs us that the garden contains a sylvan treasure: "One of the three ilex trees over a thousand years old catalogued in Castile-León".



Overall, the fortress measures 210 m / 690 ft long and only 20 m / 66 ft wide at its center, and its walls of limestone blocks are up to 3.5 m / 11 ft thick. In 1999, its south courtyard was sympathetically adapted to house a Wine Museum. Valladolid is one of Spain's leading wine-producing provinces. Its geoclimatic characteristics provide ideal conditions for producing some of the most interesting wines to come out of Spain, encompassing DOs Cigales, Rueda and Toro as well as Ribera del Duero. So it was with some justification that the provincial authorities, with the collaboration of wineries, vate bodies, chose the privileged confines of the castle as the site for the Wine Museum. The idea seems to have paid off brilliantly, to judge by visitor numbers: to date, over 300,000 since its inauguration in 1999.

Penañiel has other fine historic buildings apart from its castle-cum-museum, though there is no denying that, as in so many other towns in this area, its old quarter suffered badly from the appalling "urban development" that went on in much of Spain

we had to leave for another day. On our way back to the hotel, we stopped for a wander around Cuellar, a town full of examples of Mudéjar art (the Mudéjars were Muslims who, in return for taxes paid, were allowed to live in territories reconquered by the Christians without changing their religion), then moved on to one of the Ribera's winegrowing capitals.

Back in the 9th and 10th centuries, this was frontier territory where Christians and Muslims fought constant battles to gain ground. This explains the many castles still dotted throughout the area, albeit in varying states of preservation. Penañiel's castle proved to be an impregnable bastion against the Arabs, its legend enduring to such an extent that it was given the name Penañiel (which means 'Faithful Rock') by the Count of Castile a century later. This castle's very characteristic shape, suggestive of the hull of a ship, is best seen from the *Torre del Homenaje*, the keep or main tower, where the noble occupants had their living quarters.

## Penañiel

Guests at Bodegas Arzuaga Navarro have a choice of several genuinely interesting itineraries in this part of the Ribera. Lovers of unspoiled tranquility will opt for the Cistercian monastery of Santa Maria de Valbuena, not far away. It is a veritable monument to restraint, with an interesting two-storey cloister, the lower Romanesque and the upper Plateresque, whose silence is broken only by the song of birds nesting in the poplars along the River Duero. Those who enjoy a livelier scene should head for Valladolid, Castile-León's administrative and commercial capital. Santiago street, the city's main shopping street, is a good place to start; it leads into the Main Square, a classic Castilian square dense with bars and *tabernas* which get extremely busy at aperitif times. Valladolid is a university town, and its historic centre, or *casco viejo*, is brightened up even on grey days like the one when we were there, by the presence of students, laughing and joking as they spill out of class. Valladolid has a vast wealth of major historic buildings, whose exploration

## Eastern Ribera

The castle of Penañiel (Valladolid), national monument and home of the Wine Museum



in the 1960s and '70s. Perhaps its most exceptional group of buildings is the Coso Square, a rectangular plaza surrounded by narrow, two- and three-storey houses whose curtains, carved wooden balconies were used as vantage points from which to watch jousting or bullfighting going on in the square below. Bullfights are still held here today, which is why the ground is covered in sand, as in days of yore. Annual fiestas in honor of San Roque (14th-18th August) include bull running and *capeas* (ama-teur bullfights) which in Peñafiel have a special feature designed to thrill fans of testosterone-fueled displays: two bulls are released at the same time, one inside the ring and the other outside, so that beleaguered would-be *toreros* sometimes find themselves with nowhere to hide. As in Pamplona, no credentials are required—anyone brave enough to try his luck is welcome to take part.



**El Lagar de Isilla**  
C/ Isilla, 18  
09400 Aranda de Duero (Burgos)  
Tel: (+34) 947 510 683  
Fax: (+34) 947 504 316  
www.terra.es/personal/lagarisilla  
**Tourist Office:**  
C/ de la Sal, s/n  
09400 Aranda de Duero (Burgos)  
Tel: (+34) 947 510 476  
www.ayararanda.es

**Subterranean Bodegas:**  
www.museodevinodevalladolid.es  
Tel: (+34) 983 881 199

**Wine Provincial Museum**  
Castillo de Peñafiel  
Peñafiel (Burgos)

**Wine Museum:**  
Roa de Duero (Burgos)  
Av. de la Paz, 7  
Tel: (+34) 947 540 312

**Chuleta**  
In Roa de Duero:  
Tel: (+34) 947 552 347  
09410 Peñafiel de Duero (Burgos)  
Pza. Mayor s/n

**La Posada Ducal**  
In Peñafiel de Duero:

Fax: (+34) 983 880 623  
Tel: (+34) 983 880 505  
47300 Peñafiel (Valladolid)  
Av. Constitución, 16

**Molino de Palacios**  
In Peñafiel:

**Fuente de la Aceña**  
Camino del Molino, s/n  
47550 Quintanilla de Onésimo (Valladolid)  
Tel: (+34) 983 680 910  
www.fuenteaceña.com

**Mesón de la Villa**  
La Sal, 3  
09400 Aranda de Duero (Burgos)  
Tel: (+34) 947 501 025  
Fax: (+34) 947 508 319

**Chef Fermín**  
Av. Castilla, 69  
Aranda de Duero (Burgos)

**Recommended Restaurants:**  
In Aranda de Duero:

**Bodegas Torremillanos**

www.arzuzaganavarro.com  
hotel@arzuzaganavarro.com  
Fax: (+34) 983 687 099  
Tel: (+34) 983 687 004  
47350 Quintanilla de Onésimo (Valladolid)  
Ctra. N-122 Valladolid-Soria, km 325

**Bodegas Arzuaga Navarro**

**Bodegas with hotel:**



tion of Origin (DO) whose Regulatory Council is based here. Roa stands on a hill from which it keeps an eye on the River Duero, currently coursing through the poplars, its waters stirred up after three days of rain. There is quite a wind blowing and we hear reports of heavy snow some 60 km / 37 miles from here. I can just imagine the anxiety this must generate in the local winegrowers. May is the most dangerous month from the weather point of view: just when the vines are sending out tender shoots, ice-laden clouds can appear from nowhere and destroy a harvest in minutes.

On now to La Horra, where French monk Martin Dumas introduced the Cabernet Sauvignon grape into this region when he and his fellow Brothers of the Holy Family moved into the village back in 1909 from Bordeaux. La Horra is also the location of the plantations of old Tempranillo vines from which Peter Sissek, a Danish winemaker resident in Spain, makes his prestigious Pingus.

In Sotillo de la Ribera, one can visit the best-preserved underground winery in the region, in whose 16th-century galleries proprietor Ismael Arroyo matures his Valsotillo. Gumiel de Mercado, with its two

churches, and La Aguilera, site of the monastery of San Pedro Regalado, all provide fine examples of the Ribera's interpretation of the Gothic style. Finally, we come to Aranda del Duero, this *comarca's* geographical and commercial heart. Aranda (population 30,000) is traditionally the biggest and wealthiest town in the Ribera, but its once beautiful urban landscape has been marred by a welter of run-of-the-mill



The medieval city of Penanda de Duero is one of the most well preserved in Castile and Leon.

## The Road to Aranda

restaurant. You won't find this simple establishment listed in any of the *menus del día* and is a truck drivers' stop—yet its wine shop carries the most comprehensive stock in the whole of the Ribera. We're heading for Aranda now, but take a detour to explore the northern part of the Ribera. This takes us into the province of Burgos and the town of Roa, official capital of the Designa-

The N-122 to Soria passes through Castillo de Duero, famous as the home of Juan Martín, popularly known as "El Empecinado" (The Stubborn One)—a hero of the Peninsular War (1808-1814), known here in Spain as the War of Independence. The road passes in front of his home, today unrecognizable as such since it is now a roadside

Up on a hillside not far from Aranda, with views over the whole river plain, lies the Torremilanos estate owned by Bodegas Peñalba López. Seen from a distance, it looks like a chateau with its fountains and carefully manicured grounds, though in fact the house itself has the look of a traditional Castilian farmhouse. Its owners, husband and wife team Pablo Peñalba and Pilar Albeniz, look after the place punctiliously. Everything is spotless and very, very

near. One feels that there is a place for everything and that everything is in its place. And there are certainly a lot of things in this hotel: vases, sofas, plants, wall clocks, chests, paintings, coat stands, table clocks, lamps, foot-warming braziers, fresh flowers, dried flowers, trays, sideboards, bookcases, rugs... There are three floors to the main building. On the ground floor is a little bar leading to the bodega in one direction and to a lovely arched passage to the garden in the other.

On the first floor is a meeting room, a library and a big lounge-cum-restaurant: the hotel does not provide restaurant service as standard, but will do so by prior arrangement. The principal feature of the second floor is a bright, open lounge which functions as a sort of quadrangle or courtyard off which the guest rooms lead. The third floor echoes this pattern, though here the rooms are around a balustraded central well which looks down into the patio on the floor below. This device works



Each room at the Hotel Torremilanos is named for a famous grape variety.

buildings. Some architectural gems stand out nevertheless, among them the church of Santa Maria, considered a masterpiece of the Isabelline Gothic with its spectacular 16th-century south front, attributed to Simón de Colonia. The town's main shopping street, Isilla street, still retains its arcading, which gives it a certain old world charm. But the really exciting survivals lie hidden beneath the old quarter: a network of underground cellars dating back to the Middle Ages forming a rectangle 800 x 300 m / 2,600 x 1,250 ft, the equivalent of 7 km / 4.3 miles in linear terms. Though the cellars are privately owned, some of them can be visited. The cellar of El Lagar de Isilla is one example; the visit is rounded off with by-the-glass tastings in this traditional old *mesón*, at a long bar heavily laden with bottles and tapas.



17 m / 56 ft high tower for a picture-postcard view of a quintessentially Castilian landscape. We ended our first exploratory trip in Penaranda de Duero. On its beautiful, silent Main Square stands the Palacio de Avellaneda, a superb Plateresque building whose elaborate ornamentation contrasts with the more sober church of Santa Ana which stands opposite. The 17th-century Botica de Ximeno, one of the oldest chemists' shops in Spain

The Sorra road out of Torremilanos leads to La Vid, whose monastery is recognizable from far off by its four-part Churrigueresque steeple, then on to San Esteban de Gormaz, birthplace in 1187 of the first Castilian Parliament. Crossing the medieval bridge over the River Duero, we took the road to Alataia, a little village perched on a gorge from which can be seen the most beautifully configured and best preserved collection of underground bodegas in Castile. Continuing southwards, we came to Ayllón, another town of well-preserved historic buildings suggestive of aristocratic heritage. On the way back to Aranda is El Enebral de Hornuez, a magical forest of centuries-old *sabina* (junipers), with marvelously dense foliage and gnarled trunks.

## Lechazo Lore

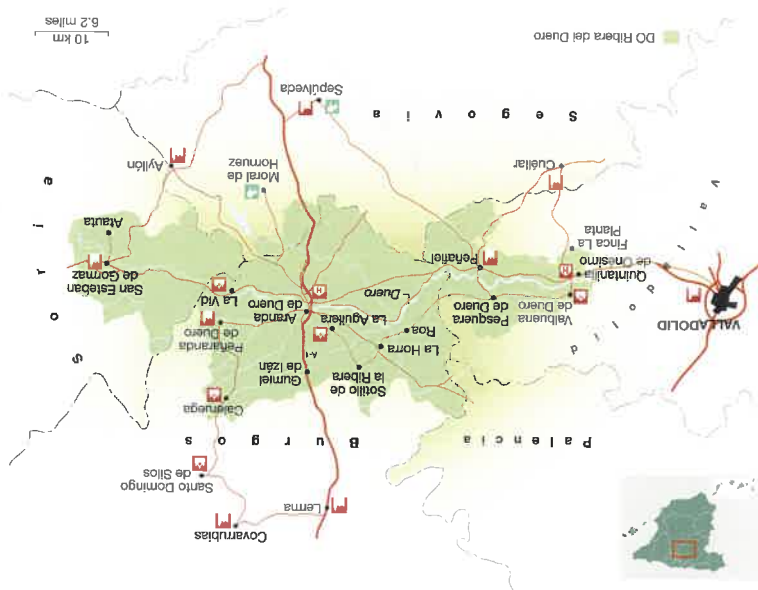
Though the Ribera's gastronomic repertoire is limited, its roast lamb would be hard to beat. This is classic

French oak casks (interestingly, manufactured on-site) and sells about 30% of its production abroad (mainly to Germany, Switzerland, Denmark, the USA and Mexico). Its range covers the whole gamut from white to sparkling (this is the only Ribera bodega producing wine covered by the DO Cava), but it is on its *crianza, reserva* and *gran reserva* (see Glossary page 143) reds that its prestige rests.

## Western Ribera

Torremilanos can be used as a base for delightful exploratory trips to places evocative of Castile's former glory. The Burgos road from here passes through Lema, a town of fine old buildings, many of them convents and monasteries, and churches illustrative of the Herrenano style at its height. Before reaching Lema, though, the little town of Gumiel de Izán is worth a visit, not least for what turns out to be its parish church, despite its cathedral-like proportions and splendid Renaissance front. Not far from Lema is Covarrubias, characterized by cobbled streets and timber-beamed houses. Downhill from here is Santo Domingo de Silos, in whose monastery you can hear Gregorian chant and absorb the tranquil atmosphere of a fine cloister overshadowed by an ancient cypress described by the poet Gerardo Diego (1896–1987) as a “Towering source of shade and sleep”. In Caleruega, one can climb up to the battlements of its

well: both floors are visually interconnected and both benefit from the natural light admitted through a skylight in the roof. There are 20 rooms in the hotel, each identified by the name of a grape variety. After such a spacious first impression, the rooms themselves seem rather small initially, but they are a perfectly acceptable size and have marvelous views. Especially so today, when the sun is shining for the first time in four days. Though there are still some menacing clouds, the wind and cold at least seem to have moved on. The winery's vineyards, which extend over 200 ha / 500 acres, lie to the south on a gentle uphill slope. Miguel Angel Peñaiba, chemical engineer and winemaker, is the bodega's viticultural overseer. He guides us around the different plantations in his 4 x 4—no mean feat after so much rain. "This stony ground is better than that," he explains, pointing to a clayey piece of land. "Stones on the surface heat up in the sun and help the fruit ripen." We approach a team engaged in shoot thinning. Miguel Angel examines the vines: "We're getting a bunch per shoot this year," he says with satisfaction. "And there was no frost last night," adds one of the workers. "There'll be no more from now on; we've made it this year." Torremilanos celebrates its centenary this year, though Pablo Peñaiba's ownership of the estate dates back only to 1975. The bodega has a capacity of 22,300 hectoliters, 6,000



*lechazo* territory. *Lechazo* is lamb less than a month old and fed only on its mother's milk—the fact of its never having eaten grass means that the meat is incomparably silky and tender. It is cooked cut into quarters (locals prefer the front quarters, which are said to be juicier) and placed in earthenware dishes which the master *asador* (roaster) thrusts deep into a big domed wood-fired brick oven with his long wooden paddle. *Lechazo* is best eaten in spring when the sheep are grazing on new pasture, since this affects the quality of the milk they feed their young. June is therefore the chosen

month for “*jornadas del lechazo*”, special days when, for 30 euros, restaurants in Aranda serve a menu with succulent baby lamb as its main course. Visiting foreigners can sometimes find the whole *lechazo*-eating ritual rather too “authentic”, so it is probably a good idea to give you a word picture of what goes on. For a start, not only is picking up the meat in your fingers not considered bad manners, it is positively recommended for maximum—literally finger-licking—enjoyment. When the *lechazo* has been roasted in the classic manner, the meat virtually falls off the

bone, emitting puffs of delicately fatty fragrance in the process. As for texture, the skin, roasted to a golden brown, will be crisp and the meat, tender and juicy. Diners help it down with the occasional mouthful of wheat bread or *torta de aceite* (almost unleavened olive oil bread) depending on local custom, and a straight-forward, tannic local red wine to cleanse the palate. This is a hearty dish, not suitable for diet watchers, particularly as it tends to be preceded by an equally caloric first course such as *morcilla de arroz frita* (fried blood-and-rice sausage) or *sopas de ajo* (bread immersed in garlic broth).

Detail of the church of San Miguel (San Esteban de Gormaz, Soria), the first example of Romanesque architecture in the province





Wine cellar area in Alauia (Soria)

The only nod in the direction of vegetables is a simple lettuce, tomato and onion salad usually served on the side as you eat the lechazo. While nearly all restaurants in the Ribera do a good roast lechazo, they do tend to be rather monothematic. There is, however, one outstanding exception (see box page 34) and a few other alternatives: El Mesón de la Villa, in Aranda, is the area's poshest restaurant and its menu features wild mushroom dishes, *congrito* (conger eel) and *cangrejos del río* (river crayfish) along with the ubiquitous lamb. Chuleta, in Roa, usually offers *espárragos trigueros a la plancha* (grilled wild asparagus) and *besugo* (red sea-bream). The menu at Molino de Palacios, in Peñafiel, includes wild mushroom dishes and rice dishes incorporating game. La Posada Ducal

in Peñaranda, a recent entry in various gastronomic guides, serves *hojaldres* (mille-feuilles) and *perdiz escabechada* (marinated partridge). The restaurant of the Fuente de la Aceña hotel, in Quintanilla de Onésimo, deserves a special mention. It has been up and running for a year-and-a-half, with Ángel García Dalmer as its head chef. Trained in France and with experience at restaurants the like of Madrid's Lucio under his belt, he serves dishes traditional to this region perked up by imaginative innovation such as *lasaña de morcilla* (black pudding lasagne) and *foie escabechado* (marinated foie gras). An added attraction are the gourmet dinners that the restaurant stages once a month, which incorporate vertical tastings of wines from the Ribera.

Carlos Tejero is a journalist and coordinator for Spain Gourmet since 2002.

Sip  
by Sip





# Spanish

Text  
Baudouin Havaux  
Translation  
Jenny MacDonald



Baudouin Havaux, an agronomist specializing in viticulture, has long-standing connections in the wine-producing regions of both Spain and Latin America and visits them regularly.

He is General Manager of Vinopres, a communication company that focuses on wine and that has been working for several years for Jerez, Rioja, Castile-La Mancha and Castile-León. He is the organizer and director of the Concours Mondiale held in Brussels, one of the most prestigious of international wine selection events which this year received almost 4,000 samples of wines sent in from all over the world.

Editor of the *VinoMagazine*, a journal for wine professionals, he is also responsible for the BENELUX Horeca for which he has produced a set of dossiers on the main wine-producing regions of Spain.

Baudouin Havaux participates regularly in seminars and congresses on wines and wine marketing.

# Selected and Tasted by International Experts

## Belgium



**Winery:** Condado de Haza, S.L.  
**Wine:** Condado de Haza Tinto,  
1998

**DO:** Ribera del Duero

**Type:** Red wine

**Elaboration:** Tempranillo 100%,

aged for one year in American oak  
casks

This young winery set up in 1998 was quick to earn a name for itself with two wines, Condado de Haza and Alenza. The former is especially attractive because it offers one of the best price/quality ratios in Spain today. Just like its mythical owner/nologist, Alejandro Fernández, Condado de Haza is a miracle of generosity, sensitivity and complexity. On the nose, its fresh fruitiness and the toasty aromas from the wood combine to give a seductive balance. In the mouth, a palette of concentrated red berries is complemented by undertones from the wood that hint at chocolate and cocoa. This wine's complexity and concentration allow it to be kept for many years. It is unusual for a wine to reflect so faithfully the personality of its maker.

#### Matching recommendation:

The perfect partner for red meat, but its freshness and acidity also make it suitable for accompanying fish dishes.

**Winery:**  
Condado de Haza, S.L.  
Tel: (+34) 947 525 254  
Fax: (+34) 947 561 098  
info@condadodehaza.com  
www.condadodehaza.com



**Winery:** Hermanos Pérez Pascuas  
**Wine:** Viña Pedrosa Reserva 1998

**DO:** Ribera del Duero

**Type:** Red wine

**Elaboration:** Tempranillo 90%,  
Cabernet Sauvignon 10%

The Ribera de Duero wines produced by the Pérez Pascuas brothers

is the stereotype of wines from this wonderful designation. The color is an intense brick red. In the nose, the dominant notes are from the wood—vanilla, cocoa, coffee and smoke. In the mouth, this is a complex, deep, opulent wine. Prolonged extraction of the polyphenols does not affect the marked presence of slightly jammy fruit flavors, such as morello cherries. A rounded elegance is afforded by the tannins from the new oak barrels. A little young yet, it is best kept for a few years, and subsequent vintages would be good collectors' items.

#### Matching recommendation:

Excellent with game and with flavor-some sauces.

**Winery:**  
Hermanos Pérez Pascuas  
Tel: (+34) 947 530 100  
Fax: (+34) 947 530 002  
vinapedrosa@jet.es  
www.perezpascuas.com



**Winery:** Fariña

**Wine:** Gran Colegiata, Campus,

Selección Especial de Viñas

Viejas, 1999

**DO:** Toro

**Type:** Red wine

**Elaboration:** Tempranillo 100%,  
aged for 15 months in new  
American and French oak barrels,

then 12 months in the bottle

Manuel Fariña was a pioneer for the Toro wines. A great lover of his region, he was keen that his wines should bear the specific features given by the brown and ochre soils to the south of the Duero river. This wine comes from a vineyard with vines between 50 and 140 years old, and is the epitome of Toro wines. A concentrated ruby color, it has a strong, complex nose that hints at redcurrants and spices. Though powerful in the mouth, it has harmony and structure, with a perfect balance between the ripe red fruit and the tannins from the new wood. To enjoy this wine's complexity to the full, it is best to decant it to bring out the morello cherry, vanilla, tobacco and spicy notes.

#### Matching recommendation:

Ideal as an accompaniment for grilled meat, meat and fish in sauce, and game.

**Winery:**  
Fariña, S.L.  
Tel: (+34) 980 577 673  
Fax: (+34) 980 577 720  
comercial@bodegasfariña.com  
www.bodegasfariña.com





**Winery:** González Byass, S.A.  
**Wine:** Apóstoles Palo Cortado  
**DO:** Jerez-Xères-Sherry  
**Type:** Palo Cortado  
**Elaboration:** 100 % Palomino,  
Solera system

In addition to the well-known classic

sheries, there are other exclusive products from Jerez that are well worth trying. One such is the Apóstoles Palo Cortado by González Byass, an exceptional wine that inspires respect. A serene approach is needed for getting the full benefit of this ageless wine, with its walnut-tinged, old gold color. The intense, persistent nose is reminiscent of walnuts, almonds, tobacco, with other hay, cachaou and toast, with other new fragrances that appear constantly with time. In the mouth, an explosion of flavors is followed by a very long aftertaste.

### Matching recommendation:

This is a wine that stands well on its own. Ideal for drinking in good company at a time of reflection, perhaps accompanied with a Havana cigar.

**Winery:**

González Byass, S.A.  
Tel: (+34) 956 357 000  
Fax: (+34) 956 357 043  
nacional@gonzalezbyass.com  
www.gonzalezbyass.es

Photo credits page 144



**Winery:** Lustau  
**Wine:** Manzanilla Párrusa  
**DO:** Jerez-Xères-Sherry and Manzanilla de Sanlúcar de Barrameda  
**Type:** Manzanilla  
**Elaboration:** 100 % Palomino,  
Solera system

The Lustau Manzanilla is not altogether characteristic of wines produced in Sanlúcar de Barrameda because it delivers the typical aromas of Manzanilla in greater concentration and with greater firmness. A gleaming gold wine, it has a complex, salty nose, reminiscent of the beaches of Sanlúcar—both intense and bracing. In the mouth it is full and generous. In addition to its to-dine-scented flavors, it offers touches of smoke, toast and salt, just right to accompany a nibble at some oily tapas such as olives or Ibérico or Serrano ham. Its lasting flavor in the mouth is quite remarkable. A great wine just waiting to be served.

### Matching recommendation:

This elegant wine does not affect the taste buds before a meal, making it the ideal aperitif. But it would also be wonderful served alongside a plate of oysters, or with "mañitas" (young herrings) or cured cheese.

**Winery:**

Emilio Lustau  
Tel: (+34) 956 341 597  
Fax: (+34) 956 347 789  
lustau2@a2000.es  
www.emilio-lustau.com



**Winery:** Vinos Blancos de Castilla, S.A.  
**Wine:** Marqués de Riscal, 2001  
**DO:** Rueda  
**Type:** White wine  
**Elaboration:** Verdejo, Vira

Marqués de Riscal first became renowned for its red wines from the Rioja, before excelling with white wines from the heart of the Rueda district.

Based on Verdejo, the emblematic, native variety in this region, the white Marqués de Riscal surprises us with its vivacity and freshness. A wine with a shine, its straw yellow color is tinted by greenish reflections. In the mouth, the Verdejo reveals its presence in its fruity aromas, offset by a touch of liquorice, and in its strength. The freshness and nerve are provided by the Vira grapes.

An aromatic, powerful and lively wine that is much appreciated on Belgian tables.

### Matching recommendation :

At its best and liveliest while young, especially with seafood and fish. Marries well with Belgian specialties such as tomatoes with shrimp, mus-sels or asparagus, or even with Herve cheese.

**Winery:**

Vinos Blancos de Castilla, S.A.  
Tel: (+34) 983 868 029  
Fax: (+34) 983 868 563  
vinosblancosdecastilla@arrakis.es  
www.marquesderiscal.com





# PX

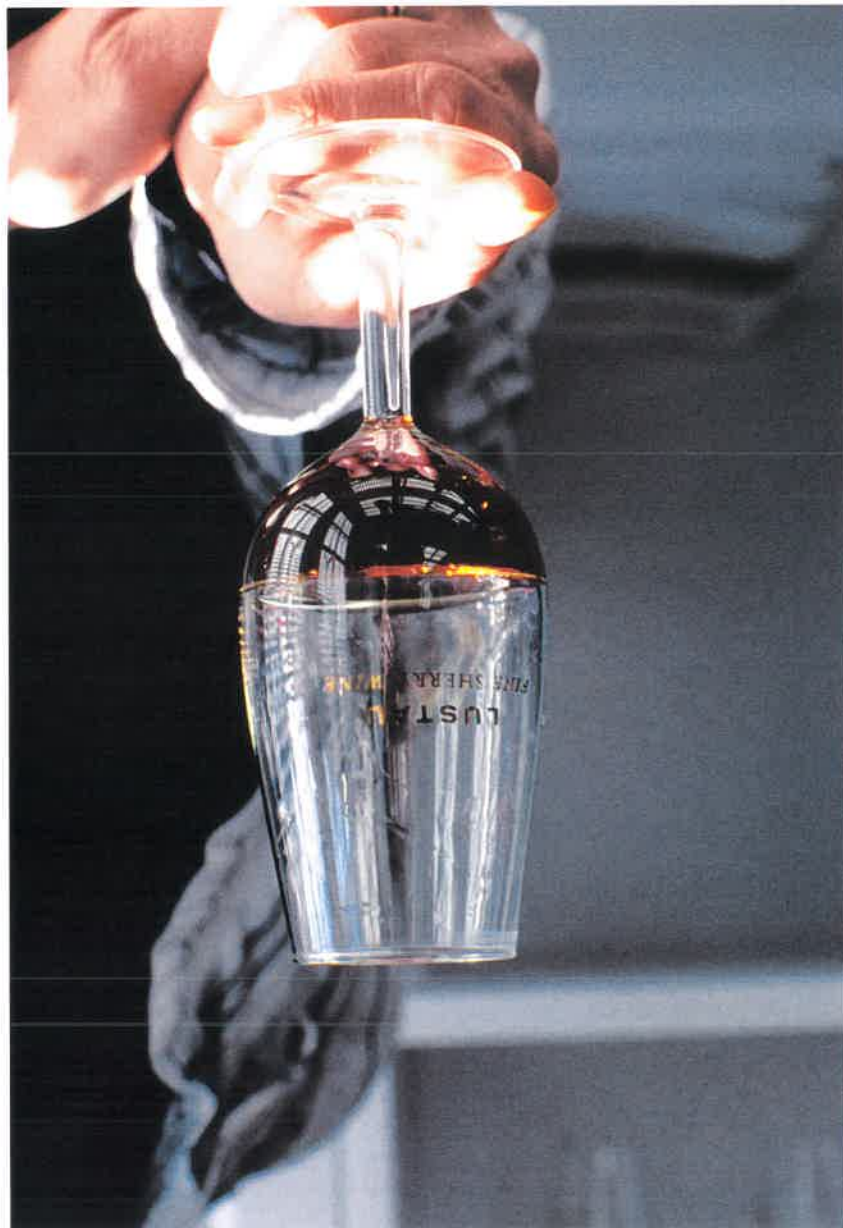
All of a sudden, the letters PX on a wine label are fashionable. Top awards at prestigious wine events and high marks by influential wine critics have focused attention on a wine phenomenon that is by no means new to fame and fortune. As far back as the 1500s, PX was at the forefront of international wine trade. The world seems to have rediscovered PX, but how exactly does one define it? Is it a grape variety, or a wine style? If wine, is it best dry, or sweet? Which vinification techniques give the most commercially attractive results, modern concepts of cold maceration and fermentation followed by bottle reduction, or age-old *criadera* (see Glossary page 143) and *solera*? One of the surprising things about it is its remarkable versatility. PX is not a simple entity to try and pigeonhole, it combines history and modernity, simplicity and complexity, tradition and the latest in luxury gourmet appeal. It may look like so many other vibrant-green grapes, acclimatized to viticulture on the rolling hills and sun-baked soils of Andalusia, yet PX stands out in offering an ability to generate an unparalleled array of products, some of which reach the very top level oenological refinement and cosmopolitan “fashionability”.



## The Most Versatile Grape of all?

TEXT  
HAROLD HECKLE

Some years ago the world-renowned wine author, Hugh Johnson, was asked what his favorite wine ever was. Wine lovers know this is an almost impossible question to answer. And yet, Hugh Johnson did not flinch from the task. He went so far as to announce in his column in *Decanter Magazine* that the one wine that stuck in his memory as the most outstanding he had ever enjoyed was Molino del Rey, a Malaga wine from the Duke of Wellington's estate in Andalusia. It was bottled at Apsley House in London around 1830 and forgotten until sold at auction by Christies about 20 years ago. "It was one of the finest dessert wines I have tasted, or-angey and smoky, and Len Evans and I soaked in it blissfully," recalls Johnson. Obviously, there is a special magic at work in the wines of Malaga. In looking at what makes a wine great you have a number of criteria to take into account. Is it the process of vinification that made this wine stand out so much? Well, to some extent, yes. Could it be the *terroir*? Once again, partly, as there are other regions in Andalusia able to make similarly amazing wines. Is there one single element that might be an overriding factor? Almost certainly, it is the grape variety involved. We are referring here to one of the most versatile grapes ever dedicated to viticulture, a grape popularly known as PX. Today, PX wine is enjoying a revival that is almost unprecedented. Wine critics from across the globe are





ous Palomino. In Málaga it shares the limelight with Muscat of Alexandria and Muscat Blanc à Petits Grains. It is only in Montilla-Moriles that PX retains an overwhelming predominance. Manuel López Alegandre, Secretary of the Regulatory Council of Montilla-Moriles, estimates that it consolidated its hold after the outbreak of phylloxera (around 1880). He reckons PX accounts for up to 75% of all grapes planted in Montilla-Moriles, sharing territory with Baladí-Verdejo, Alirén, Montepila, Muscat Blanc à Petits Grains, as well as some experimental plantings aimed at keeping up with international viticulture.

into Andalusia, by a soldier in Charles Vs (1500-1558) army. His name: Peter Siemens. While many ampelographers doubt the likelihood of this story, it adds a touch of romance to PX. Certainly, Andalusians would have experienced difficulty in pronouncing Peter Siemens, so might well have turned it into Pero Ximén, or Pedro Ximénez. If there were any truth in this tale, PX vines would have had to spread almost impossibly quickly across the countryside of Andalusia, for experts believe it was a component of the famous Mountain wine produced in Málaga in the 1500s. Today, PX has ceded almost all of its vineyards in Jerez to the more vigor-

falling over themselves to praise its quality. Just recently Robert Parker awarded five Alvear PX wines over 90 points, and an astonishing 98 points to Alvear's PX 1910. At this year's Concours Mondial de Bruxelles, Sandeman's Royal Ambrosante Old Solera PX won Grande Médaille d'Or and no less than three others won Gold (Alvear PX de Añada 2001, Alvear PX Reserva de Familia 2000 and Barbadillo's PX La Cilla). At the International Wine Challenge, 2003, Bodegas Hidalgo La Gitana won Gold with PX Napoleon as did Gonzalez Byass with Noé. Clearly, the world is taking notice of PX.

## What's in a Name?

What does PX actually mean? Here the story begins to take on quite a complex patina. PX is the name given to a grape variety. It is short for... well, it depends where you are. In the regions around Montilla and Moriles, southwest of Córdoba, the name is Pedro Ximénez. The same also applies to the triangle of vineyards delimited by Sanlúcar de Barrameda, Jerez de la Frontera and El Puerto de Santa María, at the western extreme of Andalusia. In Málaga, however, the name is Pero Ximén. Legend has it that the variety originally developed into a separate entity on the Canary Islands (some say Madeira). From there it was supposedly shipped to the Rhine, in Germany, and then



The three year old Fino C.B. is a staple of Bodegas Alvear.

## Montilla-Moriles: PX's Spiritual Home

One of Spain's flagship wineries is

Alvear, founded in Montilla by Diego

de Alvear y Escalera (Spain

*Gourmetour* n° 57) in 1729. There is

no better place to see PX's versatility

at work than in this stately and mon-

umental bodega. An ideal entry

point into the chameleon-like world

of PX is Alvear's Marques de la Sierra

2002. This is a white wine that

blends early-picked PX with small

amounts of Riesling, Chardonnay

and Sauvignon Blanc. The result is a

pleasantly surprising, refreshingly

modern white wine. It carries subtly

floral hints with a clean nose and

enough structure to ensure an enjoy-

able summer experience.

The dark galleries of this bodega are

reminiscent of Jerez. In the past

Montilla-Moriles thrived on the suc-

cess of Jerez, and continues to trade

on its similarities today. The subtle

differences that distance these wines

from sherry are what make Montilla-

Moriles products such a treat for the

experienced palate. The staple of

Alvear is its C.B., a fino with a maxi-

mum of three years contact with flor

aged in the solera system. It has a

characteristically aldehyde-driven

nose and the yeasty purity derived

from flor. And yet there is a softer,

rounder effect on both nose and

palate that distinguish it from sherry

made of the Palomino grape. It is

probably as close to the original sack

as it is possible to get. For an even

more focused experience it is worth

trying Alvear's Fino en Rama 2000.

This is a single vintage fino replicating

wines made in *lagares* (small vinifica-

tion sites in the middle of the vine-

yards) where soleras could not be ac-

commodated. Capataz Fino is C.B.

with a longer stay in solera. It is a

nuttier product, with a biscuity after-

taste. Take a fino to its final conclu-

sion and you get Carlos VII

Amontillado (box page 52). This is

the real thing, even the word Montilla

is in it. It is a very old fino, 100% PX.

In the glass it has a lovely amber hue.

On the nose the impression is rein-

forced with glorious hints of orange

peel that persist into a long finish.

It is hard not to be impressed by PX's

versatility when you realise that this

is only halfway through its reper-

toire. To come are the real block-

busters, the wines that Robert Parker

has gone nuts about. The styles so

far have expressed PX's potential

within a low residual sugar environ-

ment. Up the density of sugar

In Montilla-Moriles PX accounts for up to

75% of all grapes planted in the DO.



compounds and you come across

Oloroso Asunción. Take the sugar

levels as high as you can by extract-

ing water through evaporation and

you reach PX de Añada 2000 (95

Parker points), and PX Solera 1910

(98 points). Almost as luscious is the

extraordinary Solera 1927. If you

haven't tried your favourite ice cream

with this on it, you have no idea

what heaven is all about.

Pérez Barquero is a Montilla bodega

that combines three different compa-

nies owned by local families. Its cel-

lars convey a sense of timelessness

and of the peace in which Montilla

has been made since time immemo-

rial. Its products have established

niche markets on an international

scale. Once again, the abiding im-

pression is one of the extraordinary

versatility of PX. Viña Amalia 2002 is

60% PX blended with Airen, Moscatel

and Vitor. The grapes are picked ear-

ly to retain freshness and acidity and

hint at ripe Moscatel on the nose.

This wine is a very popular summer

white in Córdoba, Málaga and Seville

and is of export quality. Gran

Barquero Amontillado spends time

developing from fino to amontillado,

extending its ageing period to 15

years. Almost fluorescent orange in

color it leads you into warm tropical

fruit, banana peel and citrus zest on

the nose and a lively and persistent

palate. In terms of dark, sweet wine,

Gran Barquero PX, with five years age-

ing in the solera system, is currently

the youngest wine made in this style.

It retains attractive, oily qualities of

sweet PX combined with a gorgeous

nose, good palate density, and a clean

finish. There are plans for an even

younger PX, which will come on the

market soon. Pérez Barquero has de-



... This process leaves the grapes with a very high level of sugar and aromatic compounds to make for one of the wine types Parker has gone nuts about.



At harvest time the grapes are exposed to the sun for 3-4 days, turning bunches over constantly so as to allow even dehydration...

## Málaga - A Return from the Brink

After the fame found with Mountain sack, Málaga enjoyed continued prosperity supplying the Imperial Russian court and pre-Industrial Germany. Unfortunately, three events nearly proved the undoing of this historic region: phylloxera, the First World War, and the Russian Revolution. The rest of the 20th century witnessed a continual decline, culminating with the break-up and sale of the legendary Solera Scholtz in the late 1990s. Many suspected that Málaga could never recover. If you visit Málaga today, though, you will be struck by the apparent renaissance of its wines. Visit the chic bars and restaurants that characterize this city and you will notice that far from having lost its links with the

The Amonillado here is from a solera started in 1922 and reaches 21% vol. by natural means. The nose is full of nutty aromas that lead to a long finish, reminiscent of almonds. At the sweet end, Don PX has proved a success in export markets. After *pasificación* four kilos of grape make one liter of this wine. It ferments to 9% and is then boosted to 17%, spending six months in stainless tanks to cast off deposit. Further up the scale, PX 1975 is called a *gran reserva*, and PX 1961 boasts a wooden label and a spot of sealing wax to ensure that neither cork nor label can be tampered with. Both of these wines have tremendously deep and exciting palates. Production is limited to 65,000 bottles for 1975, and there is even a very rare PX 1945, Marqués de Poley, of which only 5,000 exquisite bottles are made, a real collector's masterpiece.

A short drive out of Montilla, at Aguilár de la Frontera, Toro Albala, much like Alvear and Pérez Barquero, welcomes visitors. There is a lot to see here, as Antonio Sánchez Romero (*Spain Gourmetour* n° 51), owner and winemaker, is a collector of renown, and his bodega is built in what used to be an electric plant, giving rise to the local expression of "being electrocuted" when someone has a drink too many. Their Fino en Rama is called *Eléctrico*. These wines hail from Montilles, which some claim is the best region because it develops the best flor. With five years contact with flor it is called a *solera chica*. It is very crisp, with a clean, yeasty nose with mineral hints of wet slate. Fino del Lagar takes things as far as they can go, with ten years in solera, by which time the flor is very thin and tenuous.

It seems that finally the message is catching on: Vegetable-based diets, like the Mediterranean or Asian, are both healthy and exciting. Scientific evidence abounds as to the strong nexus between our diet and our physical and yes, even emotional, well-being. Yet bringing the message home to our own kitchens and changing habits is not always easy. Up to now, that is. A wide choice of what are called baby or mini-vegetables is coming to our aid. Not only are they as nutritious as the larger version, but being consumed raw or only slightly cooked, they suffer a minimum loss of their wholesome qualities. On top of that, they are pretty. "They should look right back at you," advises Alice Waters, the famous Californian vegetable guru, as she talks about shopping for fresh vegetables. Firm, fragrant and colorful, this is exactly what these baby vegetables do. They come in handy transparent packaging that allows you to buy small one-meal portions. "Family size and patterns have changed enormously," says Juan Manuel Navarro when asked about the reason for this true boom in the production of small-size vegetables. Navarro is product manager at the firm Kernel (Los Alcazares, Murcia) that produces a full line of baby cauliflower and other crucifers as well as baby lettuce and baby leaves. "Mothers didn't work outside the home and planned daily meals for a large family," he continues to explain. "Now we only get together for dinner, perhaps not even regularly, and sedentary life calls for smaller portions. But imagine all the people who live on their own. You think they will buy a large cauliflower?" This is why European distributors



and supermarket chains increasingly require smaller, visually attractive presentations and packaging units destined for the final consumer. Additionally, as the delicate produce is easily bruised, less manipulation in the store also warrants greater freshness, which of course is key for baby vegetables. The same goes for cooking. Indeed, instead of the elaborate traditional cuisine, the emphasis now is on variety and simplicity of flavors and procedures. If not eaten raw, baby produce requires minimal cooking time. Robust flavors of old (and the corre-

## The Old Is New Again

Miguel del Pino would have added the quick but succulent tomato sauce his wife prepares with thinly sliced garlic, cross-wise cut cherry tomatoes, black pitted olives, pepper and salt quickly sautéed in extra virgin olive oil while the pasta is cooking and then sprinkled with some grated hard cheese, fresh basil and a touch of fresh pepper. Del Pino is the instigator and president of the 5-a-day Club in Spain (a movement that promotes daily consumption of at least five servings of fruit and vegetables). But he also presides over the cooperative La Palma in Motril (Granada). There is no doubt that the cherry tomato is the star product of small-size agriculture. And Spain is the largest producer in the world. La Palma alone has a yearly production of 25,000 tons, 95% of which is exported mainly to Northern Europe, sponding often unpleasant odors) have given way to a sweetness, fragrance and freshness that comes closest to that special sensation of having picked the vegetables yourself. "Modern cuisine also requires a touch of originality and a aesthetics," explains Francisco Rodríguez of the firm Durán in Mazarrón (Murcia) that is among the largest cherry tomato producers in the area. Versatility is equally important. "Take the cherry tomato, for example," Rodríguez continues, "they are decorative, you can serve them with cocktails, kids love the special sweet-sour candy-like taste and crunchiness, and in the UK they even sell them as a snack at the movies."





## A H A P P Y M I S H A P

with the United Kingdom as its number-one client, Fernando Diaz, who is in charge of quality control at the same firm, explains how in a period of less than ten years they staged a true revolution in the consumption of tomatoes. In the UK, for example, after 300 years of traditional tomatoes, now 50% of total consumption is in cherry tomatoes. "If you allow consumer's preference to prevail over any other—especially commercial—criteria, you can successfully challenge established marketing theories," Diaz explains. He and his colleagues in this branch

Thanks to a special microclimate, southern Spain (Granada and Malaga) is the sole large-scale producer of avocado in Europe. And some avocado varieties like the Fuerte (see Spain Gourmetour no. 58) just happen to produce a surprising by-product that, while called an "abortion" by the locals, is now reaching the shelves of gourmet stores as "cocktail avocados". They have the shape of a mid-sized pickle and lack the sizeable seed of full-

grown avocados, yet have their same creamy consistency and fresh nutty flavor. Sliced in half and topped with, for example, a shrimp and a little cocktail sauce, they make a pretty and flavorful bite. Being the product of a non-pollinated fruit or rather a mishap of nature, and even though exported in small quantities, primarily to France, they are as yet not commercialized on a large scale. But if demand continues to grow, we might see this happen in not too distant a future.

## SPAIN'S LEGENDARY MINIS

know that taste is key and that the sweet cherry tomato is a most desirable alternative to the traditional large-size tomato. "A baby vegetable should not only be a novelty, but offer something more, and that is ample choice and quality," he concludes. They now have 11 varieties on the market, including cherry and baby sugarplum tomatoes on the vine and have even launched an exciting new product: the sun-dried cherry tomato. Yet in order to keep improving and offer a still greater selection, at La Palma and other firms like Durán, over 600 varieties are under study in their laboratories and testing fields. The latest technology assists them in optimizing what was the original tomato, first found in Mexico during the discovery of the New World. Still today clusters of wild cherry tomatoes are found there and often treated as a weed. In fact, the word tomato is an adaptation from the Aztec word *tomatl*.

## From Foraging to High-Tech

The cherry tomato is not the only baby vegetable that has its origin in the wild. Indeed, increasingly efforts are underway to recover wild species, both to guarantee their survival and use them for commercial purposes. "In the late afternoon, women forage the edges of the fields in search of meaty herbs that they then cook in water and salt. Dressed with a splash of vinegar and a shade of oil, this will be dinner," wrote Jose Selgas, a 19th-century author, about the typical Murcian herb salad. There is no doubt that, throughout the world, foraging equaled and at



they become "wrinkled". Traditionally they are eaten with an array of different *mojos*, a local type of salsa eaten warm or cold and based on such different ingredients as the *pimiento picón*, a typical dry red pepper, or cilantro. A minority product, but not therefore less delicious, is the tender Andalusian *alcaculi* or baby artichoke that, once thinly sliced, is simply dressed with a touch of fresh lemon juice and olive oil and eaten raw.

The Spanish cornucopia is not only filled with modern day baby vegetables. A number of small-sized vegetables are as traditional to the country as flamenco. They proceed from all corners of Spain. From Navarra come the *coqillos de Tudela*, tiny hearts of lettuce that are typically cut in half and topped with some olive oil and strips of roasted red pepper and anchovy, but are also excellent when braised. Also from Navarra, and in particular the town of Lodosa, are the *pimientos del Piquillo*. These small, bright-red, mildly spicy peppers owe their name to their triangular shape that ends in a point. *Piquillo* means served with a filling of bacalao (salt-cod), but are also great in salads and sauces. These peppers have a dark green cousin in the *pimientos de Guernika* grown in the Basque Country. The even smaller (4-5 cms / 1.6-2 inch) and at times truly spicy green *pimientos de Fardón* borrow their name from a small village south of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia. They are eaten quickly sautéed in very hot olive oil and are a favorite accompaniment to grilled meats. As a result of rising demand, these peppers are now also grown in the southeast. "They are an eminently domestic product," says Jose I. Carcelan of Surinver, "but we have started to export them to Germany, Switzerland and France." We have to cross part of the Atlantic to get to Spain's Canary Islands to find the *papas bonitas*, literally, pretty potatoes. These small but succulent potatoes have remained closer to their early Andean forebears than today's large-size potatoes and stand out particularly because of the way they are prepared. Ismael Diaz Yubero, a Spanish food expert, explains that the papas are covered skin-on with water and an amount of salt that should not exceed a fourth of the potatoes' weight. Then they are slowly cooked until



an extremely delicate taste and for the time being is the most likely candidate to be commercialized shortly. The University receives the encouragement and active support of companies like Kernel or Primallor (see below) that test these products in their fields and introduce them to their European clients for tasting and, hopefully, final approval. Baby leaves are the latest in what is commercially called "the fourth line." The term refers to fresh ready-to-eat produce generally presented in handy transparent bags or "flow-pack" of different sizes. Alberto González, a senior researcher at the

elsewhere earlier on and are being successfully commercialized as a salad ingredient. They are the popular *eruca sativa* (rocket, *rucola*, or *arugula*) with its horseradish-like taste, and *portulaca oleracea* (purslane) that, with its fleshy leaves and mild herby taste, the Arabs called "the blessed vegetable." Yet other local herbs are still under study. Examples are the *cithmum maritimum* or sea-fennel which grows in coastal areas and due to its high content in vitamin C used to be sought after by sailors to combat scurvy, *moriscandia arvensis* or purple mistress, and *silene vulgaris* or maiden tears which has

times still equals survival. Yet neither is there doubt that edible herbs and greens, (as well as fruits, roots and mushrooms) found haphazardly in the wild, have a special zest to them that is hard to beat. No wonder that a team at the Polytechnic University of Cartagena (Murcia), in a project co-sponsored by the European Community, set out to recover a series of autochthonous herbs and to study their commercial viability as a fresh salad ingredient. Juan José Martínez, who leads the study, explains that two of them, while originally growing both in Asia and in the Mediterranean, had been introduced



regional Department of Agriculture in Murcia, explains that the main advantage of baby leaves over cut salad products is that being cropped at the thinnest end of its pedicel, they are minimally exposed to oxidation and therefore remain fresh longer. The fact that their growing period is shorter makes them less prone to plaques, and thus ideally fit for integrated and ecological agriculture. Additionally, thanks to an endless variety in color and taste, baby leaves allow for wonderful mixes, often called *mesclun*. The firm Primavera in Pulpi (Almería) is among the largest producers of baby leaf in Spain and offers year-round an evocative range of baby *lollo rosso*, red mustard leaf, green and red oak leaf, green and red *battavia*, spinach, *meche*, *tatsoi*, arugula, red chard, *romano*, and wild *mizuna*. Not to forget the ubiquitous baby spinach leaf, which is considered the "queen" of leaves because of its hardness and very thin pedicel.

## The Vegetable Garden of Europe

Originally, the cherished, tender and sweet, but highly perishable, baby vegetables were—and for those who are lucky enough to have their own vegetable garden, still are—just young vegetables, picked before they

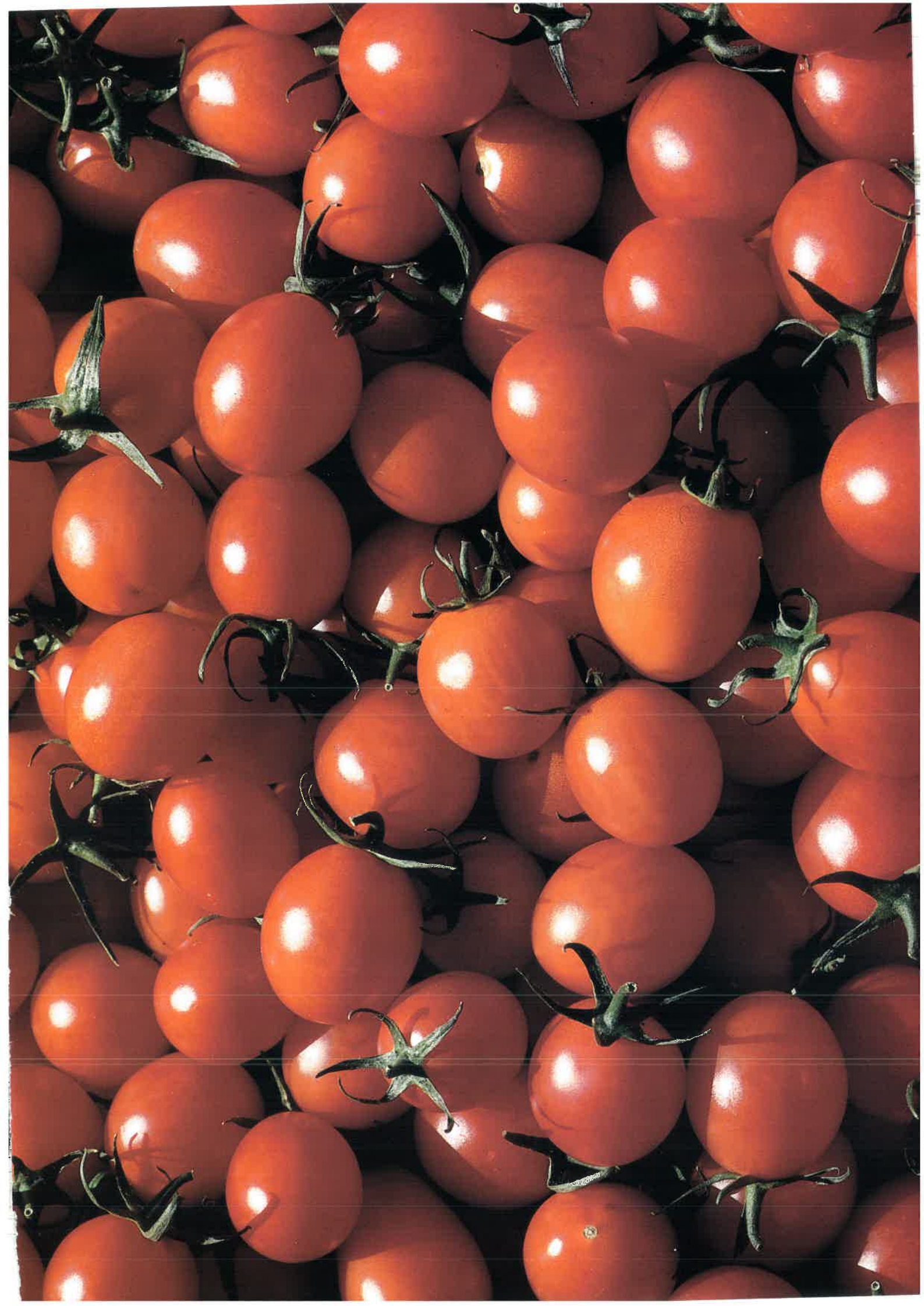


mature and may become tough and somewhat bitter. "We grow our own baby vegetables or get them from neighboring farmers," explains José Miguel "Semi" García, who is the chef at Palacete Rural La Seda, a small 17th-century palace in Santa Cruz that lies in the midst of the famous Murcian vegetable gardens (*huertas murcianas*). "To be at their best, they require a very subtle treatment. None of the delicate flavors should get lost," he adds matter-of-factly. Yet with the hugely increasing demand, large-scale baby vegetable agriculture now uses varieties that are the product of natural selection procedures. This allows the vegetables to maintain their desirable characteristics for a longer period of time, bringing their average shelf life to up to 8-10 days. Some people insist that a distinction be made between baby (young) and mini-vegetables (specially grown). In practice, however, the terms are interchangeable or the "mini" is at times used for an even smaller version of baby vegetables. The more delicate species require a sheltered environment. Vast expanses of greenhouses cover the south-east of Spain. They may not do much for the landscape but are a bliss to the regional economy and guarantee a year-round supply of fresh produce to Northern Europe. The Vegetable Garden of Europe





spans the southern tip of Alicante, as well as the provinces of Murcia and Almería and some pockets in Granada. The Costa Calida hugs a large part of it. *Calido* literally means warm, but in Spanish has a connotation of mild and placid. These are exactly the qualities that have earned the area a reputation that goes as far back as the Phoenicians and Carthaginians who came to trade and often settled in this region where they founded cities as relevant as New Carthage (Cartagena). "We have an excellent climate and fertile soil. What we often lack is water," says Dr. Juan Gonzalez Castano, a historian who has published several tomes related to regional waterworks. He explains that the Romans, who conquered the area from the Carthaginians, were the first to construct water-wells. But it was not until the Muslim invasions that the bases for a sophisticated irrigation system were laid and the fertile inland water management remains key and began to bloom. Of course, today the area features the latest technology to optimize the use of this much-prized element. So much so that it is now exporting innovative "intelligent" irrigation systems to South America and to such traditionally vanguard countries like the Netherlands or Israel.







## On the Sunny Side

Thus while most baby leaves and cherry tomatoes are grown in soil or as hydroponics in a variety of sheltered and controlled environments, with few exceptions, products like small-sized lettuce and cauliflower are produced in the open air. In order to guarantee a year-round supply, production is carried out in different geographical areas that offer adequate weather circumstances at each time of the year. These areas are determined by altitude: From November to April in coastal areas (below 150 m / 490 ft) that receive the warming influence of the Mediterranean, during intermediate periods, further inland at a height of 200-400 m / 650-1,300 ft and in summer at 750-1,200 m / 2,450-4,000 ft above sea-level. Large patches of colorful vegetables form beautiful quilts in the midst of remote mountain ranges. The idea is

to benefit as much as possible from direct sunlight without an excess of heat or cold. In fact, the reason that baby vegetables are more flavorful and sweeter than larger sizes is due to the fact that proportionally more of the vegetable's surface is exposed to sunlight. Growing produce in areas with different altitudes, of course, requires a considerable level of infrastructure and coordination. Large private producers both own and long-term rent their fields. This allows them to invest heavily in a uniform infrastructure, full mechanization, the latest handling, cooling and packaging equipment, control systems and the schooling of their personnel. The result is an optimal homogeneity in the quality of their products throughout the year. To that same purpose, large cooperatives, like Surinver in Alicante whose operations just received full USDA certification and start exporting as of

next year, mandate their 531 members to strictly adhere to centrally established unified norms for sowing, planting, growing, harvesting and handling. They are permanently assisted by a team of agronomists and regularly receive schooling on new procedures. Needless to say, as over 80% of Spanish baby vegetable production is destined for export, international quality standards are strictly complied with. "We have a total commitment to optimal quality, because our focus is on long-term relationships with our clients," says Juan Cruz, Kernel's export manager for Northern Europe.

## More Minis to Go

Relationships count both out- and inside companies. "This work has a strong pull," says Charo Lopez who, having started out as a field worker, now oversees Kernel's summer

plantations in Albacete (near Murcia). With undisguised passion she explains how the long rows of baby cauliflower, purple gratifi, curry-colored ornate *romanesco*, and other types of cabbage are worked-over again and again (up to four or five times), plant by plant, to cut only the perfect size. Like all baby-produce, these crucifers are very delicate to handle. This is why they are cut and crated leaving on several layers of outer leaves for protection so that at no time the actual cauliflower is touched. In the field they are loaded directly into refrigerated trucks and taken to the central packaging plants, where the produce is cooled down to 2°C / 35.6° F in under an hour to avoid unnecessary loss of moisture. Never will a product remain longer than 24 hours in storage before being shipped. This applies to all baby vegetables, including baby lettuce. Again in light of changed social circumstances, over the last fifteen years there has been a gradual shift from cooked

leafy vegetables like kale or chard to the consumption of raw produce like spinach and lettuce. And also here a presentation that requires a minimum of work for the end-consumer is key. The enormous success of "little gem" or heart of lettuce lies in the fact that, presented in transparent trays or bags of two to six individual units, they can be served as they come. Nothing goes to waste. So what is an advantage to the consumer is also a blessing to the producer. With large produce, like iceberg lettuce, the outer leaves (about 15%) invariably have to be discarded and this has a considerable repercussion on the cost of the final product, especially where transport is concerned. But the baby lettuce business



can also be fickle and requires imagination and determination both of producers and buyers. "As soon as the sun comes out in Northern Europe, consumption of fresh leafy vegetables takes off," says Juan Antonio Jiméñez, and explains how they closely follow the weather register at Primallor, and explains how ports in the countries of destination to make their harvesting provisions. When for the recent Easter holidays the forecast was excellent, in agreement with their clients, they punctually increased their stock. One can only imagine how disastrous a sudden change in the weather may be. Not to talk about adverse weather conditions in the production area. As with other products, increasingly clients request variety. "We strongly commit to innovation," says Pedro Sastre who heads the research department at the same firm. Like many other large produce companies, in conjunction with major seed producers and research institutions,





## W E B S I T E S

**www.ghmurciandavegetales.com**  
The web site for Murciana de Vegetales, with background information on the company, its production processes, its research and development policies and its products. (Spanish)

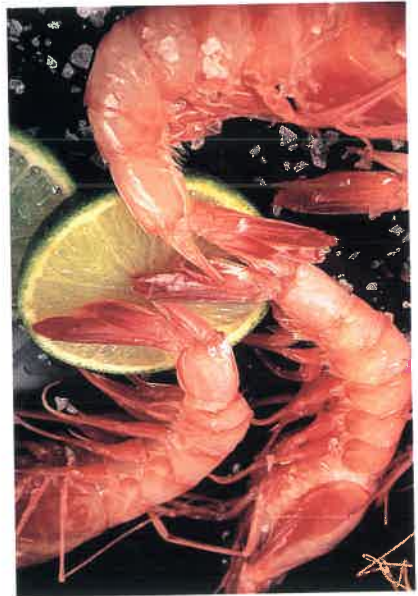
**www.kernelexport.es**  
The Kernel Export web site gives general information on the company, its production processes and quality plans, and its three main ranges of fruit and vegetable products—fresh, packaged and roasted. (Spanish)

**www.primafior.com**  
The Primafior Group site, it describes the six companies in the group, listing their main products, including their wide “baby leaf” range. It also offers the latest news on the group, with recipes and advice for healthy eating. (English, Spanish)

**Anke van Wijk** is a sociologist and has a master in gastronomy from Boston University. Her articles have appeared in the *Boston Globe*.

See Recipes page 93, Exporters page 116 and Photo Credits page 144

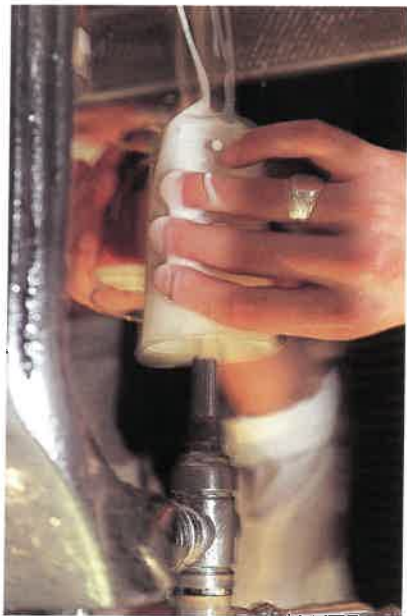
they are continuously testing new types of lettuce with different flavors, colors and textures. Research and development is taking on an ever more prominent role. “To make a profit, one needs to differentiate,” says Enrique Serrano, the owner of Murciana de Vegetales in Fuente Alamo (Murcia). As a result of nine years of in-house testing they have devised a new type of hardy lettuce called *Cresta* after the wine-red colored crest it features. Be it a cherry tomato, a baby romanesco, a mizuna leaf or a little gem, baby vegetables are a product of the future. Juan Antonio Jimenez leaves no doubt. Baby vegetables are a boom. “They allow for optimal mechanization, they considerably increase the possibility of mixing flavors and colors, they have a fairly long shelflife and suffer a minimum loss of nutritional value,” he summarizes. Soon large-size vegetables may be forever relayed to the Guinness Book of World Records.



Gambas a la plancha  
& gambas al ajillo  
(Prawns on the Griddle and Prawns  
Sizzled with Garlic)  
Raw white prawns, shell-on, dry-fried  
on the griddle & shelled prawns siz-  
zled in hot olive oil flavored with flakes  
of dried chilli pepper and finely sliced  
garlic.  
Try it at: El Abuelo,  
La Castela, Cayetano, Marisquería  
Sanchis







one salted anchovy—it's a taste-bomb of salt and acid, hot and cold, sometimes finished with a touch of parsley, garlic and extra-virgin olive oil, and always based on the contrast of crisp and soft. A second is *bacalao rebozado*, or salt-cod fried in batter—apparently simple, but technically challenging, again with a strong saltiness and crisp, hot neutral coating. And then there are herby *carrales*, peppery snails casserole in a tomato sauce with chorizo, serrano ham, bay leaf, thyme, spicy pepper and pimentón, or Spanish paprika. All these tapas have not just survived but are coming back into fashion, as the perfect companions to the red wines from Toro, Valdepeñas, Ribera del Duero, and even Madrid province.

today. While the taverns serve miniature casseroles of slow-cooked stews, the bodegas specialize in thirst-stimulating olives, gherkins, onions, and spicy peppers, and the *cervecerías* and restaurant bars have long menus of cooked tapas—like Russian salad or garlicked mushrooms—laid out at the beginning of service so they can be served up in a flash when the crowds come in. Meanwhile, in the multipurpose corner bar, there may be many kinds of tapas, but the *tortilla*, or Spanish omelet, holds sway, switching from satisfying breakfast to a filling for a roll or a mid-evening snack while watching the soccer. What these bars have in common is that most of the eating and drinking goes on standing up.

## The Castizo Heart Beats

Where, then, would you start in a Madrid tapas walking tour? One fair approach would be to randomly sample each genre of bar in an area of the city—and I think you would come away impressed by the tapas you can try there (see Tapas Routes in Madrid, page 85). Another interesting angle for serious eaters is to search out truly local specialties. Aficionados say an acid test of a *casetta* tapas—meaning one that is pure-blooded or genuinely native to Madrid—is how well it scores for being “*llamativa*”—in the old sense of the word, that is, thirst-raising and able to complement the Castilian red wines that were originally the lifeblood of the city's old taverns. Take three classics. One is the *matrimonio*, or marriage, a toasted canapé draped with one home-pickled and

## GUTSY CUISINE

A litany of Madrid's old-fashioned specialties is a lip-smacking menu for of-fal-lovers. *Oreja a la plancha* (griddled pig's ear). *Gallinajas y entresijos* (deep-fried lamb's chitterlings and stomach-linnings). *Manitas de cerdo* (stewed pig's trotters). *Lengua frita* (fried tongue). *Pincho de riñones* (kidney kabab). *Mollejas finas* (fine sweetbread). It's a list that brings Madrid close to Lyon as a mecca for offal gastronomy. The tradition here grew as a counterpart to the court's insatiable appetite for noble meat cuts, especially of lamb and pork, which left the butchers with a lot of off-fal to sell off at much cheaper prices. And since liver, kidneys and tripe were also eaten at court as “Saturday meats”, thanks to a medieval papal indulgence allowing them to be substituted for fasting-day fish on Saturdays in Castile, those who had little money learned to be ingenious with less well-known animal innards, trying them in the animal's own fat. So respected and enjoyed are these gutsy tapas that you can find them in all kinds of tapas bars—or you can also make a special excursion to the Freiduría de Gallinajas (Embajadores, 84 Tel: (+34) 915 175 933), a family tryingshop that has celebrated its 50th anniversary and is still going strong. Here, eating with a crowd of old and young *madrillos* who are tucking into lamb's chitterlings, followed up by stomach linnings and perhaps a few deliciously fried sweetbreads, you wonder why they are not considered a gourmet delicacy elsewhere.

## The Insiders' Guide to Madrid Tapas Etiquette

Tapas may come and go, but the basic rules stay the same. "The first thing is to choose the right company," wrote José Carlos Capel, author of *De tapas por Madrid* in his gourmet guide to the city's tapas scene (1996). "It's not enough to count on a group of local friends who happen to be available; their number should fluctuate between three and six in order for *el tapeo* to be complete... the route should also be approached in an informal way, with a willingness to try the best specialties in each place then pay and leave with the next stop-off already in mind. The general rule is one watering hole per participant.... Another fundamental requirement is to design a circuit with various fixed stops and a couple of optional alternatives.... Setting off in a disoriented way can be detrimental to the results." Few *madrilëños* would disagree with Capel's working principle: selective improvisation. A final local word of advice from Pedro Soleras: "You shouldn't leave your olive pits on the plate either. Chuck them away." And a final tip from an outsider who has often put their foot in it: you don't pay as you go along—you always pay at the end.



Ensaladilla rusa  
(Russian Salad)  
Diced boiled potato, peas and hard-boiled egg bound with thick bland mayonnaise, plus variable extras of diced carrot, roasted red pepper, prawns or tuna-fish.  
*Try it at: Taberna de La Daniëla, El Quinto Vino, Santander*



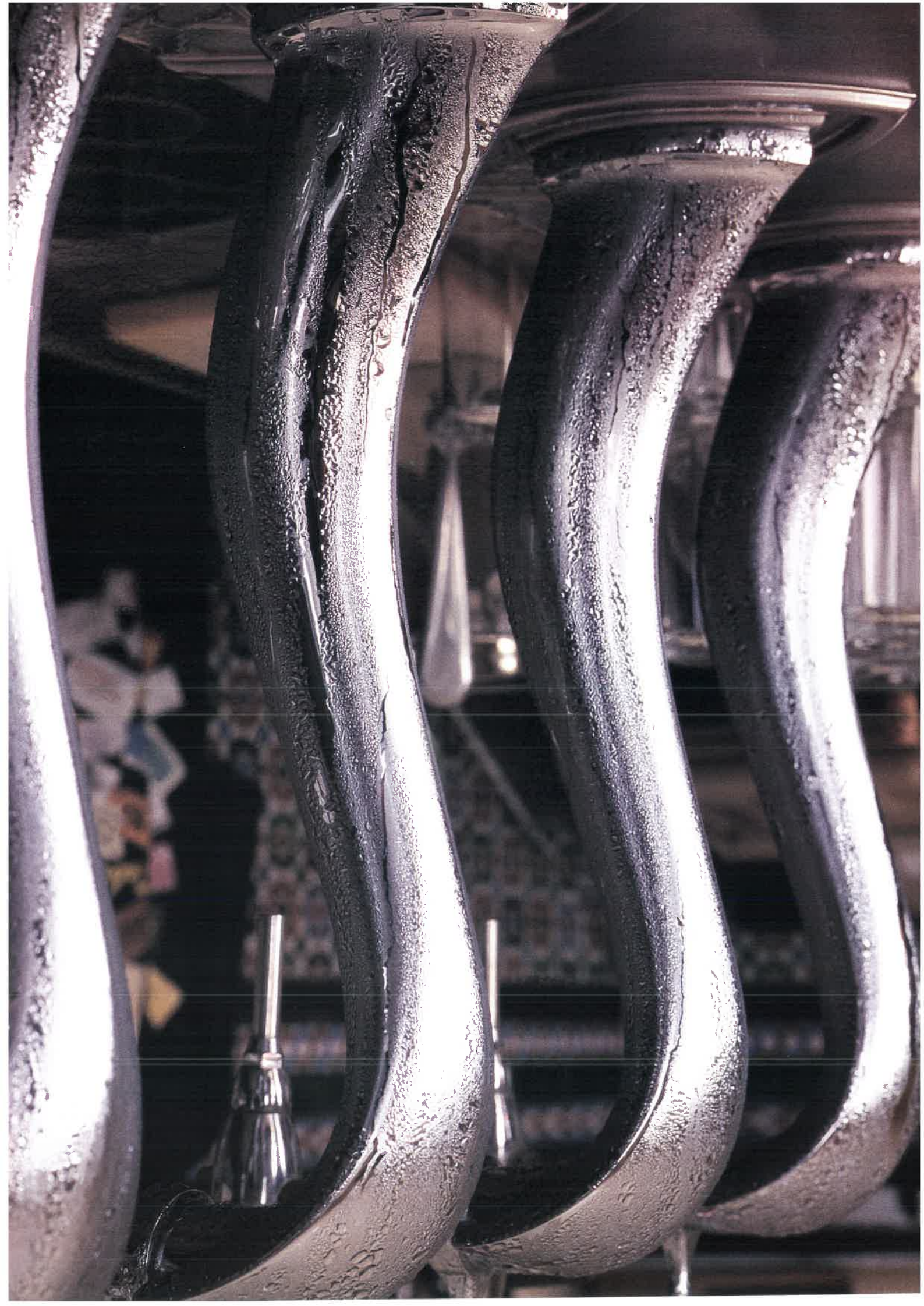
Madrid has many potato tapas, but most are regionally inspired: say, salad dressed with *allíoli* or vinaigrette, or casseroles cooked with chorizo sausage and pimentón, or southern home-fried chips with garlic. However, *pataas bravas* was invented in the heart of Madrid, at Café Bravas, just off the Puerta del Sol, from where it has traveled around the world and, by the way, been much debased along the way, often degenerating to roast potatoes with tomato ketchup. So it is worth tasting the real thing, which is made with a triple-pepper, salty, rusty-orange sauce poured over freshly

on. However, surprising as it may seem, Spaniards would usually pick *callos a la madrileña* (veal tripe cooked in tomato with chorizo, cured ham, pimentón, garlic and cloves) as a much greater delicacy. It should be added here that Madrid's tender machine-washed tripe, traditionally taken from young animals, has nothing to do with the wobbly ox-tripe many of us may remember from childhood. In any rundown of "castizo" tapas I would also give my vote to the *pataas bravas* (literally, meaning fierce potatoes—would a marketing man have dared to advise that?) Now

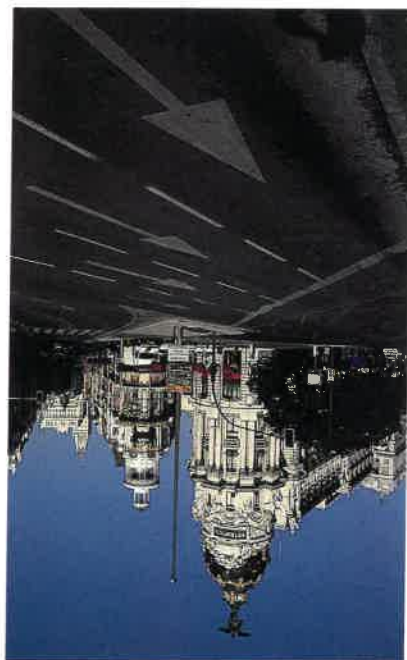
Then there is the city's unique offal cuisine, which grew from a wider-based ingenuity with limited resources (see Gussy Cuisine, page 71). English writer Laurie Lee (1914-1997) sampled and loved "delicious hot morsels—fried tongue, baked sparrows, larks on a spit, stewed cows' belly and kidneys in garlic...." The birds were outlawed long ago (sigh of relief) and there is not a lot of tongue or cow's belly on evidence in bars today, but what are left are lots of delicious chicken livers and veal kidneys—turned into kebabs, dressed up in pastry boats, casserole with *oloroso* sherry and so











T O R E A D

**Gourmetapa 2002...de tapas por Madrid**  
Editorial Paladar, (Grupo Gourmets), 2002  
**De tapas por Madrid**, by José Carlos Capel  
El País-Aguilar, 2001  
**Time for Food, Madrid**  
Thomas Cook Publishing, 2001



Barquitas de rñones al

Jeréz

(Boats with Sherried Kidneys)

Shortcrust pastry boats filled with hot chopped veal kidneys braised in a stock and sherry sauce.

Try it at: Lhardy

deep-fried potato chunks served up night and day at even brighter orange formica tables. This is thoroughly "llamativo" and, I think, delicious. It is also inimitable: the sauce is secret and patented.

## Cosmopolitan Capital

To pick up on Madrid's social contrasts, pop around the corner from Café Bravas and slip into elegant, aristocratic Lhardy. Customers serve themselves cups of consommé from samovars, or delicately pick chicken croquettes and hot savory flaky pastries from gilded glass cabinets. Considered Madrid's first proper restaurant, Lhardy was set up by a Frenchman in 1839. Today, after 164 years serving royalty, parliamentary cabinets, opera stars and assorted members of the upper crust, it survives as a splendid living symbol of the court's influence on Madrid's cooking. "Historically Madrid has always had two different cuisines," wrote Dionisio Pérez (1872-1935), journalist and author of the *Guía del buen comer español* (Guide to Good Spanish Eating), "that of the Royal Household and nobility, and that of the bourgeoisie, the middle class and the people."



## TAPAS BY THE WINDOW

In fact, since he wrote that in 1929, the two. Lhardy's famous chicken croquettes, for example, have launched a thousand versions served in humbler "bars", and at the same time this aristocratic venue serves tripe, which originally came up from the taverns. Equally the range and quality of produce on offer in Madrid, originally transported here by mule and cart to feed courtyards and hangers-on, is now often sent directly to serve restaurants. Here

The best tapas bar is the closest. And we couldn't believe it—just as we arrived at Cervecería Alemana, the one, the only, the best table became free. Since 1904, this has been a good table. It's the one in the open window, just to the right of the central door: marble-topped, bistro-chaired; the only one with light streaming in, the only one with a view of the lively Plaza de Santa Ana. It's the one on their postcard, framed in wood under the signs for *Mariscos* and *Fambres* (Shellfish & Charcuterie), a little face half-hidden behind lace curtains. So this is fate. First, some *boquerones en vinagre* (marinated anchovies), flecked with parsley and garlic. Then some golden-skinned *fritos de bacalao* (salt-cod fritters), the cod flaking into warm, juicy tiles; and a sunny wedge of still-warm *torrillita* (Spanish omelet), and a cold beer. Shall we move on? No, we can't give up this table. Let's borrow a little of the age-old Spanish wisdom, and slow down, take it easy. Every time we stand at a bar in Madrid, we look at each other in wonder—why doesn't the whole world eat like this? Socially,

slowly, swooping and diving and sipping, then going back for more. Sharing small plates of things that taste singularly or themselves—pungent, seductive, punchy, crisp, peppery, fruity, spicy or fragrant—and yet are neighborly, co-dependent, better for being part of the crowd. So, a little sizzled *chorizo*, and a glass of *sangría*. And all the while, the view-of-boy-baiting gifts in hipster jeans, or seriously Loewen'd women passing by the 250-year-old Teatro Español, or tourists gazing enviously at our little table. It isn't the best tapas in the world—that's better around the corner at La Trucha, with its grilled artichokes and fried *chopitos* (baby squids), all cooked to order, or at the charming Taberna Dolores, with its anchovy and blue cheese *pinchos*, or at the happy, casual Los Gatos with its *empañada* (stuffed pie) lined counters, or the atmospheric, dark-walled Taberna de Antonio Sánchez with its bowls of *chipirones* (small squid) and glasses of Valdepeñas wine from the barrel; or the elegant bar of Combarro, with its wondrous *pulpo a feira* (boiled octopus dressed with *pimentón* and olive oil) and *angulas* (baby eels)—but it was the best time (now) and place (here) to have it.

**Cervecería Alemana.** Plaza de Santa Ana, 10. Tel: (+34) 914 294 356  
**La Trucha.** Manuel Fernández González, 3. Tel: (+34) 914 295 833  
**Taberna de Dolores.** Plaza de Jesús, 4. Tel: (+34) 914 292 243  
**Los Gatos.** Jesús, 2. Tel: (+34) 914 293 067  
**Taberna de Antonio Sánchez.** Mesón de Paredes, 13. Tel: (+34) 915 397 826  
**Combarro.** Ortega y Gasset, 40. Tel: (+34) 915 778 272

*Jill Duplex and Terry Durack are two Australian food writers now living in London, where Jill is The Times Cook, and Terry is restaurant critic for the independent on Sunday. Together, they write and photograph food and travel stories for Food & Travel (UK) and Australian Gourmet Traveller.*

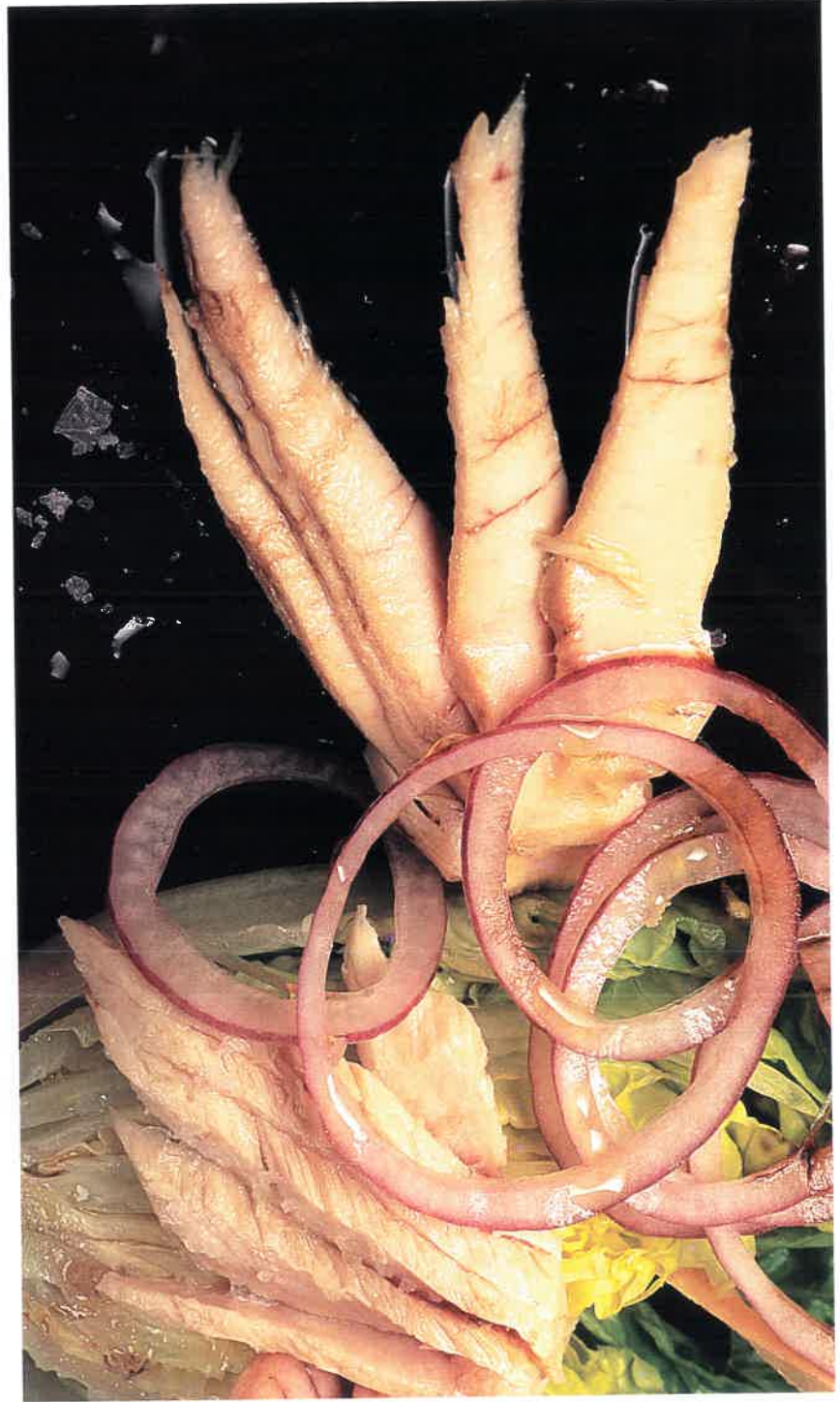


Patatas bravas  
(Fierce Potatoes)  
Deep-fried potato chunks, served hot  
with a spicy-hot pepper sauce.  
Try it at: **Café Bravas**



customers of every kind rub shoulders on equal terms—all expect variety and quality and ask for it, sometimes quite vociferously. Luis Peláez explains, "After the Civil War the señores began to come to the taverns. Before that they only went out to cafés. And the ladies came too! And so we served them simple things, say an anchovy on bread, to go with their glass of wine. Now in some places your tapa was free, and in others you paid for it. There was a certainly rivalry between them as the customers always wanted variety—





**Cogollos de Tudela  
 con ventresca de atún**  
*(Lettuce Hearts from Tudela  
 with Fillet of Tuna)*

Baby lettuce hearts with vinaigrette  
 and chunks of tuna fillet preserved in  
 olive oil.

**Try it at: Bocaito**

different things each day. We picked up ideas here and there. We served fried chorizo on bread, we began to stew venison, we pickled our own anchovies and we brought in Galician pies, for examples. And there were fashions. In the early 1950s came the glut of cheap shellfish. Oysters sold for a peseta and elvers sold at seven pesetas a serving! Today, the seafood in Madrid's tapas bars remains the clearest example of the lust for quality here. "Nothing is better organized in the whole gamut of Spanish life than the system by which the fish of the Atlantic and Mediterranean coasts are hurled across Spain to the capital..." wrote Jan Morris (1926-) in her book *Spain* (1979). And as ever, some madrilenos are able to pay for the best. But the passion for fish and







## TAPAS - HOPPING IN MADRID

I am devoted to Madrid, Spain's engaging, lively capital. In the course of my visits there, I have found great *tapas* bars in many different barrios of the city, but I still like the ones in the old quarter around the Plaza Mayor/Puerta del Sol area and in the historic literary quarter west of the Prado. The areas where I first began to experience the joys of eating *tapas* some 30 years ago. I often meet friends just south of the Plaza Mayor on Cava Baja, a street where there are more than 20 *tasas* and restaurants. Sometimes we begin at Lucio, one of Madrid's most popular *taberna-restaurants*, with *boquerones en vinagre* (house-pickled fresh anchovies) and *olivas gordas* (plump green olives) with *manzanilla* sherry at the bar. Another night, we may meet in the bar at La Taberna del Alabardero, located alongside Madrid's opera house, for Basque-inspired *tapas*. After a *tapa* or two and a drink, we drift up the romantically lit old-quarter streets to the Plaza Mayor, perhaps stopping for a shared dish of *salpicón de mariscos* (shell-fish, onions, and green peppers in *vinagre-ta*), *langostinos a la plancha* (plump prawns grilled with sea salt), *pimientos de Padrón* (fried small green peppers) or wedges of *torrillo de patata*, with a cold glass of good Spanish draft beer.

By walking from place to place in the night air, the appetite stays sharp. Often we walk a few blocks east to the plaza Plaza Santa Ana, where many gather at some of the city's most lively outdoor cafes, classic bars and *cervecerías* and the drink of choice is cold beer on tap. Atmospheric Cervecería Alemana, a built-fight bar that Hemingway used to frequent, is a classic choice. At the much newer Bar Moderno, there is a good selection of very special *tapas* made with *denominación de origen* products such as Cabrales, Torta del Casar or Mahón cheeses, *chorizos* from Salamanca, white asparagus and *Piquillo* peppers from Navarra, and some

**Lucio.** Cava Baja, 35. Tel: (+34) 913 653 252  
**La Taberna del Alabardero.** Felipe V, 6. Tel: (+34) 915 472 577  
**Cervecería Alemana.** Plaza de Santa Ana, 10. Tel: (+34) 914 294 356  
**La Moderna.** Plaza de Santa Ana, 12. Pasadizo de San Ginés, 5. Tel: (+34) 913 656 546  
*Gerry Dawes is a New York-based writer who specializes in Spanish wine, gastronomy and travel. He has been enjoying tapas in Spain for more than 25 years.*

## Huevos estrellados

(Shattered Eggs)

Eggs fried in olive oil and served broken over freshly home-fried potato chips or crisps.

Try it at: Los Huevos de Lucio, El Quinto Vino





## Croquetas

(Croquettes)

Deep-fried breadcrumb-coated croquettes filled with creamy béchamel and chunks of cured ham. The variations are too many to list, but include flaked chicken, chopped prawns or langoustines, mashed salt-cod, wild mushrooms and cured beef.

Try it at: **El Quinto Vino, Triclinium, Tasca La Farmacia, Bodegas La Ardosa, El Olivar de Ayala, Bocaïto**



## S A M P L I N G   S P A I N   I N   T H E   C I T Y

Close your eyes. You may be in downtown Madrid, but the tastes and smell of your food can take you to green Atlantic Spain, or east to the Mediterranean, or south to Andalusia, or around the meseta's tablelands. For Madrid, although every inch a capital, is inextricably linked to the Spanish regions, like the hub of a wheel held in place by its spokes. Its melting-pot population has translated in foodie terms into a great chance to sample tapas from around the country. Here is a clockwise tapeo around Spain via just a few of literally dozens of bars in the city that catch the character as well as the flavors of place. For a whiff of north-western **Galicia** try Casa Gallega (Bordadores, 11. Tel: (+34) 915 419 055). Hop westwards to **Asturias**, and its sidrerías, or cider-houses, at Casa Mingo, a summer favourite close to the river (Paseo de la Florida, 2. Tel: (+34) 915 477 918). Travel east to

the **Basque Country** at traditional Alkalde (Jorge Juan, 10. Tel: (+34) 915 763 359). Get the flavor of **Catalonia** and the designer-Mediterranean at Paradis Madrid (Marqués de Cubas, 3. Tel: (+34) 914 297 303). Drop south to sample **Murcia** at El Ventorrillo Murciano (Tres Peces, 20. Tel: (+34) 915 288 309). Soak up **Mediterranean Andalusia** at the Taberna del Puerto (Fernán González, 50. Tel: (+34) 915 046 699). Try mouthwatering produce from **Extremadura** at the Taberna de Conspiradores (Cava Baja, 7). Drop by La Toscana (Manuel Fernández González, 10. Tel: (+34) 914 296 031) to taste straightforward **Castile-Leonese** cooking and visit La Tasquita (Jaime de Urbietta, 24. Tel: (+34) 915 781 154) for **Manchego** dishes and produce. And that is just a start ... Then there's the vinous variation—a great way of tasting all the new wines appearing from little known areas. Try Triclinium, Aloque and Estay from the list above,

Devinis Wine Bar (Paseo de la Castellana, 129. Tel: (+34) 915 564 033) or the Taberna el Sarmiento (Hortaleza, 28. Tel: (+34) 915 311 571) or the Taberna de Cien Vinos (Nuncio, 17. Tel: (+34) 913 654 704). Two consummately elegant laid-back traditional drinking spots: are La Venencia (Echegaray, 7. Tel: (+34) 914 297 313), which sticks to five types of *fino* & *manzanilla* (only) and the Anciano Rey de Vinos Bailén, 19. Tel: (+34) 915 595 332), which serves Málaga wines across the board, from dry to sweet.



## Escabeche de codorniz (Quail Escabeche)

Quail, whole or jointed, skinned and fried then conserved in a wine vinegar, olive oil, bay-leaf and garlic marinade.

Try it at: **El Tabernario, Casa Remigio, Triclinium**

## Tapas Routes in Madrid

### Sol & Huertas

A classic route reflecting the city's social contrasts. Settings range from full-blown Belle Époque to orange formica-topped café décor. Good for traditional light tapas to wake up your appetite.

### El Abuelo I

Victoria, 12. Tel: (+34) 915 212 319  
Wonderful old bar true to its popular origins with cooking on the griddle and burners in full view. *Specialties:* gambas a la plancha (prawns griddled in their shells), gambas al ajillo (sizzling prawns fried with garlic, parsley and spicy peppers), sweet red wine.

### Lhardy

Carrera de San Jerónimo, 8.  
Tel: (+34) 915 222 207  
A charming journey into the city's aristocratic past, with samovars of consommé and glass cabinets full of flaky pastries.

*Specialties:* barquitas de higaditos al jerez (pastry boats with chicken livers braised in sherry), croquetas (croquettes), hojaldritos salados (savory flaky pastries); consommé (light beef consommé), fino and wine.

### Las Bravas

Pasaje Matheu, 5. Tel: (+34) 915 215 141 (and four other branches)

The home of the legendary patata brava, perhaps the most widely imitated tapa of them all. *Specialties:* patatas bravas (deep-fried potatoes with a spicy-hot pepper and pimentón sauce), oreja brava (griddled pig's ear with brava sauce), mejillones al limón (mussels on the shell cooked with lemon), boquerones fritos (crispy fried sardines).

### La Trucha

Manuel Fernández y González, 3.  
Tel: (+34) 914 295 833  
A classic theaterland tapas bar with a wide, largely Andalusian menu—southern-style deep-frying is the big speciality—and smart white-jacketed waiters.

## W E B S I T E S

### Tapas

#### [www.atapear.com](http://www.atapear.com)

A "tapa culture" web site, full of information about the history of the tapa. A guide to over 1,500 establishments all over Spain, with 200 recipes, advice on the tapeo, and a lexicon. (Spanish)

#### [www.lanetro.com](http://www.lanetro.com)

The website for one of the many guides to Madrid, giving information on tapas bars, instructions for finding them and comments on their specialties, service and decor. You can also search for tapas bars in the different districts of the capital and in towns in the Community of Madrid. (Spanish)

### Turismo

#### [www.descubremadrid.com](http://www.descubremadrid.com)

The Madrid Community tourism web site. It offers information on accommodation, leisure activities, points of interest, history, festivals, trade fairs, congresses and statistics. (English, Spanish)

#### [www.munimadrid.es](http://www.munimadrid.es)

Web site for the Town Council of Madrid. The tourism section gives information on accommodation, museums, sightseeing, exhibitions, cultural centers, the Art Walk and useful facts. (English, Spanish)



**Casa Alberto**  
Hurtas, 18. Tel: (+34) 914 299 356  
A 19th-century tavern that has kept its decor and a traditional madrileño tapas menu intact. *Specialties: albondigas de ternera* (veal meatballs), *callos* (braised tripe), *cazuela de rabo de toro* (braised bull's tail).

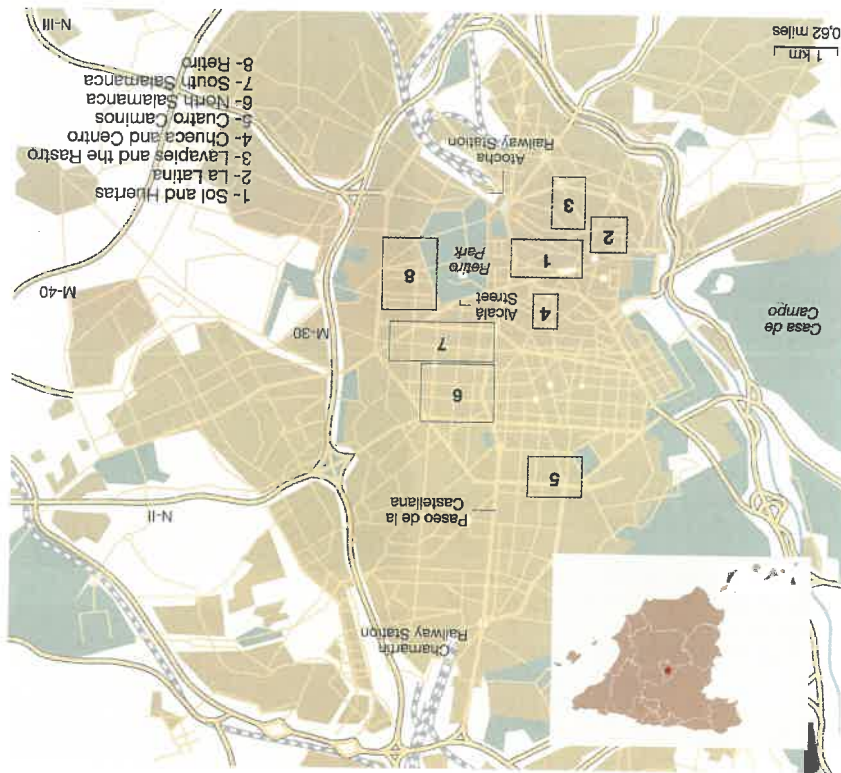
**La Latina**  
The epicenter of the new grazing trend. Alongside the emblematic bars of Madrid's historic quarter are hip new taverns serving quality wines and new-wave tapas—here the bars are so closely packed there's almost no walking.

**Casa Antonio**  
Latoreros, 10. Tel: (+34) 913 666 336  
Simple but delicious cooked tapas in a welcoming old tavern. *Specialties: cecina con pimientos* (cured beef and roasted red peppers), *pisto* (braised Mediterranean vegetables), *queso de Valdedén* (blue-veined mixed milk cheese).

**Casa Paco**  
Pl. de la Puerta Cerrada, 11. Tel: (+34) 913 663 167  
One of the city's great restaurant bars, classy but informal, with impeccable cheeses and cured hams (at a price) to get your appetite going. *Specialties: jamón ibérico* (iberico ham), *queso manchego* (Manchego cheese), *chicharrones cocidos* (brawn).

**Taberna Los Huevos de Lucio**  
Cava Baja, 30. Tel: (+34) 913 662 984.  
Spawned by restaurant Casa Lucio—interesting new tapas ideas, served as *estrellados* (fried broken eggs and potatoes), *ensalada de perdiz escabechada* (partridge marinated salad).

**Taberna el Tempranillo**  
Cava Baja, 33. Tel: (+34) 913 641 532  
Old redecorated tavern with a young crew, good music and a strong list of wines by the glass, plus small (tapas-sized) and larger toasts. *Specialties: tosta de jamón de pato con berenjena* (toast with duck ham, fried eggplant strips and olive oil), DO wines by the glass.



**Matitum**  
Cava Alta, 17.  
Tel: (+34) 913 658 237  
Small-scale, with a cool young crowd and original cooked creative tapas as well as toasts and wines by the glass.  
**Specialties:** *brki con lombarda y queso de cabra* (red cabbage and goat's cheese brick), *fritos de bacalao y gambas* (fried salt-cod and prawns), DO wines by the glass.

**Lavapiés & the Rastro**  
The tapas bars in the characterful sloping streets of Lavapiés—once the city's Jewish quarter and now the heart of alternative Madrid—reflect the quarter's blend of local traditions and new lifestyles today. Fun to visit after the Rastro flea-market on Sunday lunchtimes.

**La Taberna de Antonio Sánchez**  
Mesón de Paredes, 13.  
Tel: (+34) 915 397 826  
19th-century bullfighting décor adorns this narrow-fronted historic tavern, which serves its own draft vermouth and simple canapé-tapas or more interesting cooked *raciones*. **Specialties:** *torrilla de San Isidro* (salt cod and onion omelet), *huevos estrellados* (fried eggs served over home-fried potato chips).

**Los Caracoles**  
Toledo, 106. Tel: (+34) 913 664 246  
A taste of times gone by, with large pots of braised snails simmering slowly and really excellent *torrilla*. **Specialties:** *caracoles* (snails with chorizo and pimentón), *torrilla de patatas* (Spanish potato omelet), *callos a la madrileña* (braised tripe with tomato and chorizo).

**Alonque**  
Torretila del Leal, 20.  
Tel: (+34) 915 283 662  
The pioneer of Madrid's bars that matches selected Spanish wines and tapas is pleasantly low-key with a seriously knowledgeable wine list.  
**Specialties:** *pastel de cebolla* (onion pie), *pimientos de Piquillo rellenos de morcilla* (Piquillo peppers stuffed with black pudding), *bacalao marinado* (marinated salt-cod), DO wines by the glass.



## La Mancha en Madrid

Miguel Servet, 13.  
Very relaxed bar with good wine, cheese and charcuterie platters, and the chance to try other quality produce and products from central Spain. **Specialties:** *morteruelo* (soft game pâté), farmhouse cheeses, DO wines by the glass.

## Chueca & Centro

Madrid's new Soho came back to life in the mid-1990s, but it's the traditional tapas bars which still carry the day for good food personality and a buzzy atmosphere.

**Bodegas La Ardosa**  
Colón, 13. Tel: (+34) 915 214 979  
A 19th-century tiled tavern that thrives around the local young crowd, jazz sound-track and cooked tapas.  
**Specialties:** croquetas de cecina y carabinero (cured beef or prawn croquettes) salmorejo con jamón (Cordoban gazpacho with cured ham chips), pâté canapé.

## Santander

Augusto Figueroa, 25.  
Tel: (+34) 915 224 910  
Small stand-up bar, always full, serving good classic tapas and some puddings too. The unmicrowaved tapas are the best. **Specialties:** *ensaladilla rusa* (Russian salad), *pincho de mejillón* (preserved mussel and spicy-hot pepper on a stick), *taza de caldo* (cup of hot broth), *canapé de anchoa* (salted anchovy in olive oil canapé).

## El Cisne Azul

Gravina, 19. Tel: (+34) 915 213 799  
A gourmet haunt for those in search of Spain's amazing range of wild mushrooms and fungi, sold here by weight and simply to show them off at their best. Pricy, inevitably. **Specialties:** *setas y hongos* (fresh wild mushrooms, in season), *chulettas de lechal* (lamb chops).

## El Bocatoio

Libertad, 6. Tel: (+34) 915 321 219  
Definitive, not just for the range of the produce on offer, but for the quality of cooking and produce, the choice on offer and the waiter's style and conversation.  
**Specialties:** *bocatos de paté de bacalao* (not toast topped with chilled cod's liver





# Txirimira

General Diaz Porlier, 91.  
Tel: (+34) 914 014 345

Basque-influenced seasonal "miniature cuisine" from a young chef-proprietor. *Specialties:* foie plancha con brevas caramelizadas y PX (griddled foie with sherry), millojas de berenjena, bacon, tomate, albahaca, setas de cardo y tomillo (layered eggplant, bacon, tomato, basil, oyster mushrooms and darts).

One of the city's most varied clusters of tapas bars in this area of shopping streets – each bar takes a completely different approach, but all hit high gastronomic standards.

# South Salamanca

A blue-tiled traditional tavern which runs like a well-oiled machine, serving excellent *empañadas* (flat pies) and Russian salad. *Specialties:* *empañadas* (flat pies), *variantes* filled with tuna, salt-cod with raisins, etc), *ensaladilla rusa* (Russian salad), *variantes* (cocktail olives and gherkins etc).

# Taberna de La Daniela

Ayala, 84. Tel: (+34) 915 767 764  
Strong southern influences show in this spacious bar serving some traditional Andalusian tapas and other more personal creations. Excellent cooking and produce. *Specialties:* chipirones con cebolla frita y ali-oil (squid with fried onions and garlic mayonnaise), *croquetas de Roquefort* (Roquefort cheese), *croquetas*, *montados de charcutería* es-pañola (ibérico ham and olive oil canapés).

# Jurucha

Ayala, 19. Tel: (+34) 915 750 098  
Classic but unpretentious family-run gourmet tapas bar, launched in the late 1940s, serving a great array of Basque-influenced tapas that evolve slowly over time. *Specialties:* *laminada de bacalao gratinada* (gratin of salt-cod), *carne asada con salsa de ciruelas* (roast beef with prune sauce).

# Estay

Hermosilla, 46. Tel: (+34) 915 780 470  
An elegant pioneer of haute-cuisine tapas balancing Madrid's old-fashioned specialties with modern creativity. *Specialties:* *tigres* (stuffed deep-fried mussels), *bo-quetones con anchoas* (pickled and salted anchovy canapés), *berenjenas rellenas* (stuffed eggplants), *brandada* (salt-cod purée), *tortilla de patata* (Spanish potato omelet), *brik de bre* (brie brik).



## Retiro

Close to the north-eastern side of Madrid's central park are tapas bars with stand-out cooking and a fun, informal atmosphere. They pack out on Sundays after everyone has been for a walk in the park.

### El Tabernario

Avda de Menéndez y Pelayo, 17.  
Tel: (+34) 915 046 211  
Unusual cooked tapas—mainly Castilian and Andalusian—and a wide range of wines to try in a relaxed atmosphere. *Specialties:* *rebana de huevas de erizo* (sea-urchin on toast with tomato), *pepitoria de gallina* (braised hen), *codornices en escabeche* (stuffed sardines).

### Martsquenta Sanchis

Avda. de Menéndez y Pelayo, 13.  
Tel: (+34) 915 742 429  
Downhome shellfish bar famous for its home-pickled anchovies, griddled prawns and more. *Specialties:* *boquerones en vinagre* (anchovies pickled in vinegar with

garlic and parsley), *berberechos al vapor* (steamed cockles), *gambas cocidas a la plancha* (boiled or griddled prawns).

### La Casteja

Doctor Castelo, 22. Tel: (+34) 915 735 590  
It's the bar that seems to have it all—every kind of tapa, great service and drinks, wonderful old tavern décor, stylish waiters, excellent produce. Inevitably, it's crowded and its not cheap. *Specialties:* *boquerón con anchoa* (marinated and salted anchovy on toast), *almajas con manzanilla* (clams with manzanilla), *revuelto de hongos* (shirred eggs with wild mushrooms), *tostada con crema de cabrales y nueces y jamón de pato* (toast with cream of Cabrales cheese with walnuts and duck ham).

### Casa Portal

Doctor Castelo, 26. Tel: (+34) 915 742 206  
A long-established Asturian restaurant with a welcoming bar serving juicy omelets and farmhouse cider typical of the region's cider-houses. Warming winter food. *Specialties:* *tortilla de cebolla* (onion



omelet), *canapé de Cabrales* (canapé of Cabrales creamed with cider), *chorizo cocido* (boiled sausage), dry cider.

### La Antigua

O'Donnell, 8. Tel: (+34) 915 761 498  
A tiny tiled tavern with good tapas, mainly based on frying in olive oil, and some of the biggest croquettes in town. *Specialties:* *tortilla de camarón* (prawn omelet), *tortilla de verdura* (vegetable omelet), *croqueta de bacalao* (salt-cod croquette), *rollito de morcilla de Burgos* (black sausage fried in milk pastry).





## PX Bavarois

(Bavarois de PX)

**Serves 8:**

12 eggs  
300 g / 10 1/2 oz sugar  
150 ml / 1/2 cup 2 tbsp PX  
30 g / 1 oz thin gelatin sheets  
250 g / 9 oz beaten cream

**PX sauce:**

100 g / 3 1/2 oz sugar  
100 ml / 1/2 cup / 4 fl oz PX

## Duck's Liver Paté with PX Sauce

(Paté de hígado de pato con salsa de PX)



### Serves 8-10:

250 g / 9 oz fresh duck liver  
1 tbsp sea salt and water for soaking  
1 level tsp salt  
1/2 level teaspoon black pepper  
1 small can truffles  
250 g / 9 oz streaky green bacon  
250 g / 9 oz lean pork  
50 ml / 4 tbsp brandy de Jerez  
50 ml / 4 tbsp PX

### PX reduction:

Half a bottle of PX  
125 ml / 1/2 cup 1 tbsp / 4 fl oz  
single cream  
Juice of half an orange  
1 tsp cornstarch  
Salt  
Pepper  
Dijon mustard  
Melba toast

Cover the liver with cold water, a few ice cubes and the sea salt. Place in refrigerator and leave for 2 hours for the blood to soak out. Drain, dry with kitchen paper, remove any veins, etc. and cut into dice. Also cut the bacon and pork into dice and fry in a lightly greased pan. After 5 minutes, place the paté on top and fry lightly. Season, pour over the brandy de Jerez and, when hot, flambé. Remove from heat and add the Pedro Ximénez and the chopped truffle with the juices from the can. Stir, leave to cool, then blend. Transfer the mixture to a sheet of cling film, form into a roll about 4 cm in diameter and tie up the ends. Refrigerate for a minimum of 24 hours and a maximum of 8 days.

### PX reduction:

Reduce the PX to half (about 30 minutes over low heat). Add the cream and cornstarch dissolved in the orange juice. Bring to the boil

and season. This sauce can be kept for several months in the refrigerator and can be used for other dishes. Cut the paté roll into slices using a hot knife. Place on slices of Melba toast, and serve with the sauce and a touch of mustard.

### Preparation time:

1 hour, plus time to chill

### Cooking time:

15 min.

### Recommended wine:

A PX from the DO Málaga y Sierras de Málaga. This wine is amber in color, semi-sweet and fresh, with the varietal character of raisins. It makes a good, but not too sweet, partner for this flavorful foie gras paté with a drop of mustard and the sweet PX sauce.



Soak the gelatin sheets in cold water. Beat the egg whites until stiff adding 1 tbsp sugar at the start and 5 tbsp when almost beaten. Beat the egg yolks with the remaining sugar (about 6 tbsp) in a thick-bottomed pan or double boiler, add the PX and thicken, stirring all the time, over a very gentle heat. Strain the gelatin into the egg mixture and stir until dissolved. Cool by placing in a bowl containing ice water. Mix in the beaten cream and finally incorporate the stiff egg whites. Grease a

ring mold 24 cm in diameter with a mild-flavored oil and pour in the mixture. Refrigerate for at least 8 hours. To turn out, submerge the mold for a few seconds in very hot water then turn upside down on a serving dish.

**PX sauce:**  
Make a light caramel with the sugar then dissolve with the PX. Serve the Bavarois with the sauce and with beaten cream if wished. It may also be made in individual molds.

**Preparation time:**  
45 min, plus time to chill

**Cooking time:**  
20 min.

**Recommended wine:**

An old PX from DO Jerez-Xères-Sherry. The long *solera* aging process gives this sherry a mahogany color, and brings out its sweet, complex flavors. Powerful and dense in the mouth, the sensation it offers is an ethereal one that combines to perfection with the smooth texture of this dessert.



# Lobster with a Dressing of PX and Sherry Vinegar

(Bogavante con aliño de PX y vinagre de jerez)



**Serves 4:**

1 Galician lobster  
or 200 g / 7 oz Picón, Cabrales or  
other blue cheese  
Half a bay leaf  
Ice plant and salad leaves

## Dressing of PX and sherry

**Vinegar:**  
100 ml / 1/2 cup / 4 fl oz PX  
100 ml / 1/2 cup / 4 fl oz sherry  
vinegar  
100 ml / 1/2 cup / 4 fl oz virgin  
olive oil  
1 tsp coarsely-ground mustard  
Salt  
Pepper

## PX dressing:

Cook the lobster in boiling salted  
water with a bay leaf for 20-30 min-  
utes, depending on size. Remove the  
head and front claws and set aside.  
(This recipe can also be made replac-  
ing the lobster with blue cheese.)  
Dissolve the mustard, salt and pep-  
per in the sherry vinegar and mix  
with the PX. Beat in the oil to make  
an emulsion. Wash the salad leaves,  
place in a bowl and dress with a little  
of the sauce. Peel the lobster tail and  
cut into slices (or cut the cheese into  
cubes). Place one or two slices of  
lobster (or a few cubes of cheese) on  
each plate, garnish with salad and  
trickle a few spoonfuls of dressing  
over the whole dish. If desired, light-  
ly crush a few peppercorns in a mor-  
tar and sprinkle over.

**Preparation time:**  
30 min.

**Cooking time:**  
20-30 min.

**Recommended wine:**

A straw-colored *fino* from DO Mon-  
tilla-Moriles, 100% Pedro Ximénez.  
Its powerful aromas will allow this  
*fino* to stand on its own against the  
sherry vinegar. This wine is dry in  
the mouth with a touch of salt, but  
slightly pungent and fresh, with a  
long aftertaste.



## Cabbage Stuffed with Marinated Cod

(Repollo relleno de bacalao con ajada)



**Serves 4:**

4 mini cabbages  
300 g / 10 1/2 oz salt-cod  
Half an onion  
40 ml / 3 tbsp / 1 1/2 fl oz virgin  
olive oil  
1 tbsp sugar  
Salt

**Marinade:**

3 cloves garlic  
100 ml / 1/2 cup / 4 fl oz virgin  
olive oil  
1 tbsp *pimentón* (type of paprika  
from Spain), half sweet, half hot  
1 tbsp vinegar  
Salt

Soak the salt-cod in water for 36  
hours, changing the water every 8  
hours. Drain and remove any bones.  
Cut into small dice or thick strips.  
Finely chop the onion and fry in the  
oil. Before it begins to brown, add  
the cod and fry gently.  
Remove outside leaves from the cab-  
bages and cook whole in boiling wa-  
ter with salt and the sugar for 20  
minutes. Drain.

**Marinade:**

Heat the oil and fry the thinly-sliced  
garlic cloves until brown. Remove  
from heat and add the pimentón.  
Mix over a gentle heat making sure it  
does not burn. Remove from heat  
and add the vinegar. Lift out the  
slices of garlic and set aside. Leave  
the marinade to settle.

**Cooking time:**

30 min.

**Recommended wine:**

A red DO Ribeira Sacra made from  
Mencia grapes. A rich-colored, fruitily  
wine, just acid enough to neutralize  
the full flavors of the cabbage and  
marinated fish, complementing them  
with its freshness and taste.

**Preparation time:**

30 min, plus time for the marinade  
to settle

Open up the cabbages to make a  
hollow in the centre and fill with the  
fried cod and onion mixture. Pour  
over a little of the strained marinade,  
leaving behind any sediment, and  
garnish with the garlic slices. It can  
be served with young potatoes.







## Broccoli, Cauliflower and Romanesco Cauliflower with Warm Ham Vinaigrette

(Brécol, coliflor y romanesco con vinagreta templada de jamón)

### Serves 4:

2 mini broccoli  
2 mini romanesco cauliflowers  
2 mini cauliflowers  
Salt  
1 tbsp sugar

### Warm vinaigrette:

100 g / 3 1/2 oz Ibérico ham  
1 firm, red tomato  
1 thin green pepper  
2 spring onions  
120 ml / 1/2 cup / 4 fl oz virgin olive oil  
40 ml / 3 tbsp / 2 1/2 fl oz sherry vinegar  
Chives  
Salt  
Pepper

Bring water to boil with salt and 1 tbsp sugar. First cook the cauliflower for 30 minutes, then drain and set aside. Then cook the romanesco cauliflower for 30 minutes and remove and, finally, cook the broccoli for 20 minutes. Drain and keep all the vegetables warm.

### Vinaigrette:

Dissolve the salt and pepper in the vinegar, add the oil and beat to make an emulsion. Blanch the tomato then peel and cut into small dice, chop the spring onions and pepper. Snip the chives with scissors and stir the vegetables into the oil and vinegar. Add the finely-diced ham and bring the mixture to the boil.

Warm plates, and serve the vegetables dressed with the vinaigrette.

### Preparation time:

30 min.

### Cooking time:

30 min. approx.

### Recommended wine:

A DO Tarragona, with the pleasant herb notes afforded by the white Garnacha and the body and fruitiness of the red Garnacha. A very Mediterranean wine, refreshing but creamy enough to compete with the strong flavors of these vegetables.

## Cherry Tomatoes in Torta del Casar Cheese Sauce

(Tomates cherry en salsa  
de torta del casar)

### Serves 4:

500 g / 1 lb 2 oz cherry tomatoes  
200 g / 7 oz Torta del Casar or Torta  
de la Serena cheese  
100 ml / 1/2 cup / 4 fl oz single cream  
100 ml / 1/2 cup / 4 fl oz milk  
Fresh basil  
Thyme  
Pinch rosemary

Melt the Torta del Casar or Serena cheese (these are very creamy cheeses that are practically liquid at room temperature) with the milk and cream over very low heat or in a double boiler, stirring all the time to prevent it from separating. Season with freshly-chopped basil and a pinch of rosemary and thyme but using only tiny quantities. Taste. Arrange the mini tomatoes on the plates, pour over the cheese sauce or use it as a dip.

### Preparation time:

45 min.

### Cooking time:

20 min.

### Recommended wine:

A young DO Somontano made from Sauvignon and Merlot grapes, with its dry tannins and strong aroma should prove a good partner for the creamy cheese sauce, and the sweetness of the Merlot will counter any acidity in the tomatoes.



# Green Leaves with Grilled Goat Cheese

(Hojas verdes con  
queso de cabra gratinado)



Serves 4:

300 g / 10 1/2 oz goat cheese  
1 tbsp oil  
1 bag green baby leaves

## Vinaigrette:

120 ml / 1/2 cup / 4 fl oz virgin  
olive oil  
40 ml / 3 tbsp / 1 1/2 fl oz sherry  
vinegar  
1 tbsp honey  
Salt  
Pepper

## Vinaigrette:

Dissolve the salt, pepper and honey  
in the vinegar and beat in the virgin  
olive oil until an emulsion forms.  
Cut the cheese into 2 cm slices and  
grill until golden. Serve onto plates,  
add the salad and dress with the  
vinaigrette.

## Preparation time:

20 min.

## Cooking time:

5 min.

## Recommended wine:

A white reserva from DOCa Rioja,  
made from a blend of Viura, Mal-  
vasia and Garnacha grapes. The long  
aging process gives this wine a gold  
tone, a powerful aroma and hints of  
the wood. In the mouth it is full and  
rich, its slight sweetness marrying  
well with the goat cheese.

## Lettuces Stuffed with Belly of Tuna, Anchovies and Piquillo Peppers

(Lechugas rellenas de ventresca con anchoas de Santoña y pimientos del piquillo)



**Serves 4:**

4 mini lettuces  
1 small can belly of tuna (*ventresca*)  
1 small can Santoña anchovies  
1 small can Piquillo peppers  
100 ml / 1/2 cup / 4 fl oz virgin olive oil  
2 cloves garlic  
Salt  
Pepper

Wash the lettuce and drain. Fry the thinly-sliced garlic in hot oil until golden. Open up each lettuce in the center to make a hollow and fill with the tuna fish in pieces. Place strips of Piquillo pepper and anchovies over the top of each lettuce

**Recommended wine:**

4 min.

**Cooking time:**

20 min.

**Preparation time:**

pepper.

each plate with one whole Piquillo forming a cross and pour over the garlic and oil mixture. Garnish

Try a young rosé from DO Navarre. A clear, fruity wine with an appealing raspberry color and aromatic hints of strawberry, it should complement the freshness of the lettuce and tone down the acidity of the dressing.

## Red Cabbage with Apples, Pine Nuts and Raisins

(Lombarda con manzanas y refrito de piñones y pasas)

**Serves 4:**

4 mini red cabbages  
2 apples  
1 onion  
60 g / 2 oz butter  
100 ml / 1/2 cup / 4 fl oz oil  
2 cloves garlic  
50 g / 2 oz pine nuts  
50 g / 2 oz raisins  
50 ml / 3tbsp / 2 fl oz vinegar for soaking  
Salt  
Pepper  
1 tbsp sugar  
50 ml / 3tbsp / 2 fl oz vinegar

Cook the red cabbages in boiling salted water with 1 tbsp sugar for 30 minutes, drain off some of the water leaving them just covered and add the vinegar to give them a shine. Drain, cover and keep warm. Finely slice the onion and apple and fry with butter in a frying-pan until

**Cooking time:**

45 min.

**Preparation time:**

**Recommended wine:**

30 min.

A Tempuranillo *crianza* from the DO La Mancha offers a fine, fruity flavour with aromas of black pepper and ripe berries, good partners for the cabbage, fruits and nuts.

golden. They can also be cooked for 10 minutes in the microwave, in which case boil off any excess liquid and brown over the heat if necessary. Fry the garlic in the oil and lightly brown the pine nuts. Remove from heat and add the raisins after first soaking them in the vinegar. Place a layer of apple and onion on each plate, top with the red cabbage and sprinkle with the fried garlic, pine nut, raisin and vinegar mixture.





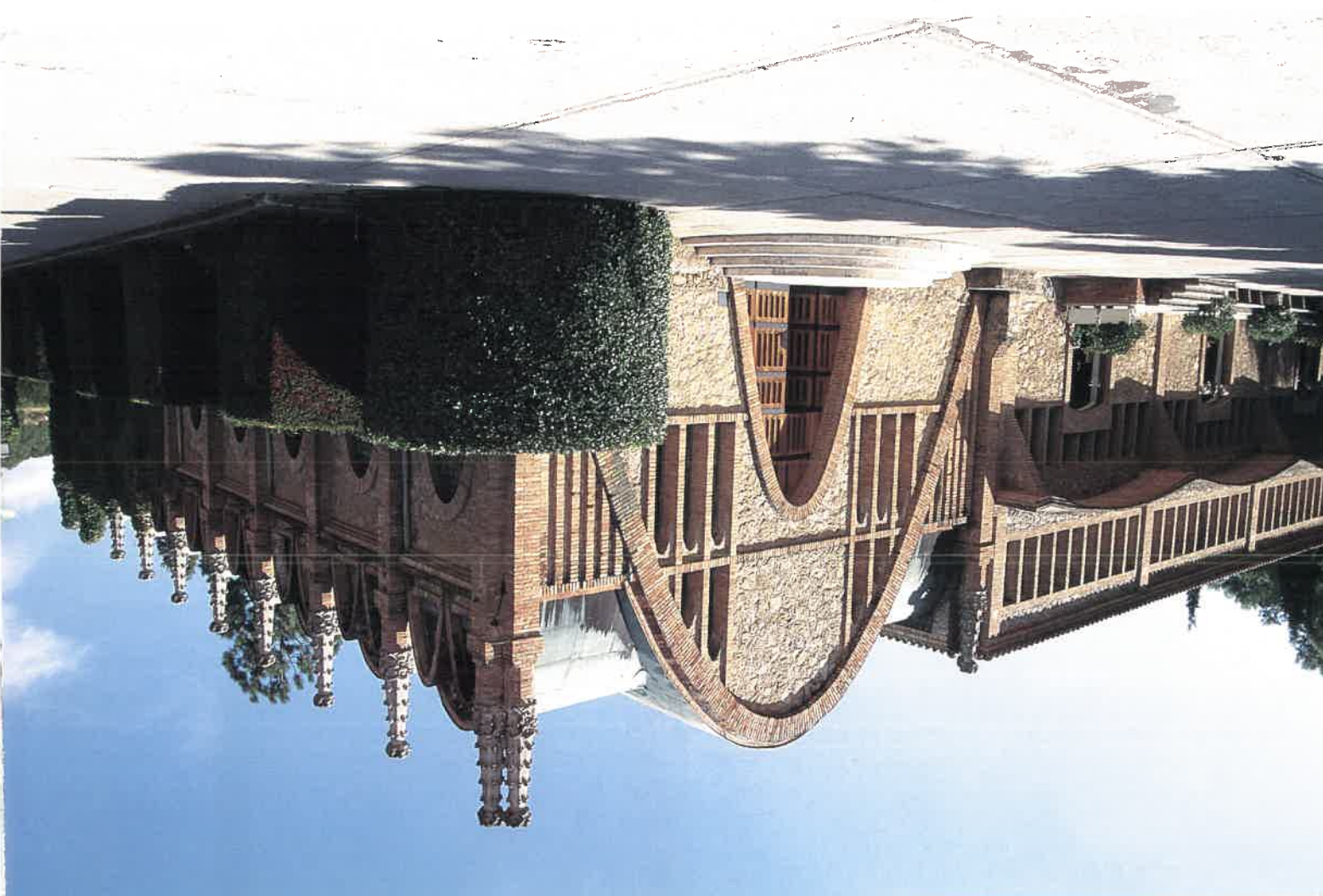
# Effervescence in

## The Architecture of Wine through the Centuries

### Part 2

Barcelona at dusk. The towers of Gaudí's Sagrada Família are etched against the evening sky. Antonio Gaudí (1852–1926) envisioned his fantastic modernista cathedral just ten years after Catalonia produced its first Cava in 1872. Disregard the buildings' architectural and iconographical significance for a moment, and isn't there something in its soaring brick-built towers with their vertical sequences of little perforations leading up to bursts of abstract glazed mosaic at their tops somehow suggestive of bubbles fizzing to the surface in a

Facade of the labelling and shipping hall at Codorniu





# CATALONIA

flute of Cava? And indeed, *modernista* wineries exist throughout this region, from Penedès to Priorato, Conca de Barberà to Terra Alta, representative of a period when the interests of winemaking and architecture coalesced in Catalonia and changed the face of its rural landscape. The first decades of the 20th century saw a veritable effervescence here of artistic activity, political commitment and socioeconomic change. Dozens of *modernista* wineries were built at this time, their architecture characterized by evocations of the medieval and a fascination with artisan ornamentation. They provided the context in which to nurture the wines of a region in the process of recovering its national identity with the turn of a new century.

The Celler Gran, nowadays wine museum at Codorniu



splendor of their medieval Catalan heritage while also making a contemporary statement.

## Middle-class Modernism

Manuel Raventos was one example of a rural landowner thoroughly steeped in the environment that gave rise to modernism. In 1885, he had inherited the Can Codorniu estate from his father, Josep, creator on that very estate of the first bottle of Cava in 1872. Manuel went on to expand the winery, opting to concentrate exclusively on Cava-making, planting American vines as a measure against the phylloxera epidemic that was wreaking havoc in the Penedès, and traveling to France to round out his oenological education. By the close of the 19th century, with Codorniu already producing 100,000 bottles of Cava a year, Manuel Raventos made the decision to build a big new winery on his Sant Sadurni de Noya (in Catalan: Sant Sadurni d'Anoia) estate. He employed as his architect Josep Puig i Cadafalch (1867-1956), author of middle-class houses in Barcelona such as Casa de las Punxes, Casa Macaya and Casa Amatller, which today are hailed as modernist masterpieces. He designed Can Codorniu

as an extraordinary complex made up of three different buildings: the Celler Gran (or big cellar), the labeling and shipping hall, and the Raventos family house, Casa Patral. The Celler Gran and the labeling and shipping hall were built between 1895 and 1915. The Celler Gran is where grapes are pressed and fermentation takes place. Puig i Cadafalch's solution for roofing this large, double height area is extremely simple: the space is divided transversally into eight sections by round arches which support Catalan vaults (of exposed brick) with reinforcing arches placed at the top of each pier. The exterior walls use *totoxo* (Catalan brick) in combination with stonework, each section being topped by a series of mosaics composed of Cava bottle glass. The labeling and shipping hall is an imposing building which takes its inspiration from the great spaces of the Catalan Gothic period, such as Barcelona's medieval covered shipyards, the *Atarazanas Reales*. Gaudí's influence is evident in the use of parabolic arches to configure a space roofed by a longitudinal Catalan vault in which large windows, again parabolic arch-shaped, admit the light required by the tasks for which this hall was designed. The walls are built of a combination of stone and traditional Catalan brick. On the

The 'modern style' or 'Liberty style' first emerged in Britain in the late 19th century, a close relation of the aesthetic naturalism championed by English writer and critic John Ruskin (1819-1900). Between 1890 and 1910, the new style was to spread throughout Europe, acquiring a different name in each country as it did so: *art nouveau* in France, *Jugendstil* in Germany, *Secessionsstil* in Austria, *stile floreale* in Italy, and *modernismo* in Spain. Its arrival in Catalonia coincided with a time of economic prosperity allied to an emerging political and cultural nationalism which, after centuries of suppression, demanded recognition for the region's specific and identifying features. Modernism found its epicenter in Barcelona, the demolition of whose city walls in 1860 had created new possibilities for planned urban growth. Well-to-do Spaniards back from the colonies after making their fortune, middle-class families made wealthy by burgeoning industrialization, and big country estate owners all chose to build their houses in this new area of the city known as *El Ensanche* (literally, "The Enlargement"). Modernism's singular artistic tenets with its combination of historical evocations and fantastic ornamentation provided businessmen, the bourgeoisie and landowners alike with a means of reclaiming the





hall and Monjuïc Stadium. A third bay was added in 1953 by César Martinell i Brunet (1888–1973), an architect responsible for some 40 modernista wineries in the course of his career. The Cooperativa de La Espluga de Francolí winery's three bays are 46 m long and 12.5 m wide / 151 ft x 41 ft. Nine concrete and brick diaphragm arches configure a great 12 m high space which accommodates 40 underground winepresses and 60 vats with capacity for 34,500 hectoliters of wine. On the exterior, the main facade makes a feature of the diaphragm arch shape, here segmented into stained glass panels. Blind arcaiding in Catalan brick, a historicist reference to the Lombard Romanesque, is used as a decorative element on each facade. The water tower is reminiscent of the tower of Codorníus Casa Pairal: its conical shape roofed with fine glazed tiles and its decoration includes colored tiles with flower and castle motifs. The decorative elements used in this winery are simple: La Espluga de Francolí's town escutcheon in the glazed tiling of a side gable, a molded cornice around each bay, and a spherical pinnacle crowning each facade.

La Espluga de Francolí at dusk. At this time of day in Catalonia—in San Sadurn de Noya, in Gandeda, in Conca de Barbera, in Montblanc and

exterior, the outline of each parabolic arch is topped by a neo-gothic pinnacle—a medieval reference. Casa Pairal was built last, in 1906, during Puig i Cadafalch's so-called 'White Period'. This white stuccoed mansion embodies the order and hygiene which were so much a part of the new urban culture. The building incorporates both vernacular Catalan elements, such as a long balcony characteristic of local *masties* (farm-houses), and historicist ones, such as a cylindrical tower reminiscent of Casa de las Punxes in Barcelona.

## Modernismo for the Workers

La Espluga de Francolí (in Catalan: L'Espluga de Francolí) modernista winery was built not by a rich landowner but by a group of local farmers who had formed a union to better cope with the ravages of the phylloxera epidemic. An initial scheme submitted by architect Lluís Domènech i Montaner (1850–1923) having been rejected by the union on the grounds that it was "too arty", a two-bay winery was eventually built to revised plans in 1913 by his son, Pere Domènech i Roure (1881–1962), later to be co-architect of such significant buildings as Barcelona's Palau Nacional concert

*Bingen Urquijo Garay, information manager and architecture enthusiast, has created guided routes around many of Madrid's most interesting buildings.*

dozens of other Catalan towns—the distinctive shapes of its modernista wineries are etched against the evening sky. These thrilling combinations of concrete and toxxo, neo-medieval arches and exquisite ornamentation, are monuments to a time when architecture and wine came together in splendid conjunction in Catalonia at the dawn of a new century.

# LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Text  
Vicky Hayward

Ignacio Medina's new book about where to eat while you are on the road is a really

mass of restaurant guides published each year. Entitled

**La guía comer en carretera** 2003 (The Guide to Eating on the Road 2003), it is writ-

ten with economy and irony, as suggested by the subtitle:

"Only the places where it is worth stopping on 17,000 km of national highways".

Also Medina's criteria are right on the mark, as one might expect from a resis-

tant critic of his standing here are truck-drivers' pit-

stops as well as more fashion-able dining joints, so you can

find your way to the best lo-cal cooking. Since the guide is laid out by highway, it's

wonderfully easy to use as you head down the road. In-

deed, since there are very good roadmaps and a short

list of hotels, you could effec-tively rent a car and eat your way around Spain from the

book. (Anaya, [www.anaya.es](http://www.anaya.es)) An amusing book to take with you on the journey would be Ángel Martínez Salazar's book **De techo y ol-**

**la-Alojamiento y cocina en los libros de viaje por España** (Of Roofs and Pots—Accommodation and Cooking in Travelers' Accounts of past centuries. The first travel-er quoted at length is Geoffroi de Buletoir, a 14th-

century Parisian pilgrim, who wrote "I have eaten mush-

rooms in the Montes de Oca,

after which I had my bag stolen by some English ban-

ditis or thieves". It is Martínez Salazar's eye for such telling

detail which lights up dozens of accounts by famed and less

well known authors of vari-ous nationalities, including Spaniards. The plural vision is

another plus, as is the wide geographic scope within Spain and lots of interesting

snippets—for example, Mme de Aulnoy, the famous diarist, was thought to be an im-

poster by her contemporaries and *gazpacho* (cold vegetable soup) rarely had tomato in it

as late as the 19th century. Recommended. (Mitraguana Ediciones, [www.mitraguana.es](http://www.mitraguana.es))

**Vinos y viñedos de Castilla y León I** (Wines and Vine-

yards of Castile-León I) Alain Huetz de Lemp had spent 14

years driving up dirt-tracks to vineyards and delving into

local archives by the time he presented his study of north-

western Spanish vineyards to the Sorbonne in 1953. Forty years later, part of this thou-

sand-page opus magnum—the section on Castile-León—has been translated into Spanish for the first time. It is breath-taking in scope, covering the big picture—that is, the histo-

ry of winemaking and the wine trade from medieval

times to the 1960s—as well as the detailed structure of indi-

vidual vineyard areas. The re-naissance of the region's vine-

yards, which were largely forgotten by the world at the time Huetz de Lemp was

studying them, also lends a new perspective, making one

reevaluate the contribution of traditional wine culture in a high-tech era. (Junta de Castilla y León, [www.jcyl.es](http://www.jcyl.es))

## In Brief

### FOODWAYS & HISTORY

**El laberinto del comensal. Los oscuros símbolos de la comensalidad** (The Table

Companions Labyrinth. The Obscure Symbols of Eating Together) Alejandro Arribas Jimeno's extended essay ana-

lyzes the everyday practices of eating—our expectations, pleasures and fears, as played

out around the dining table. This is an interesting book

giving focus to wide reading that delves into Spanish his-

tory for much material, but the lack of footnotes or

sources for each chapter makes it difficult to evaluate

many of the anthropological arguments. (Alianza Editorial, [www.alianzaeditorial.es](http://www.alianzaeditorial.es))

**El libro del pimentón** (The Book of Pimentón) This lav-

ish book is dedicated to the history of Murcian pimentón, or sun-dried ground red pep-

per—as opposed to La Vera's smoke-dried pimentón. Like saffron, pimentón (of both

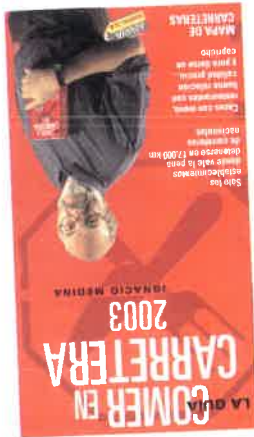
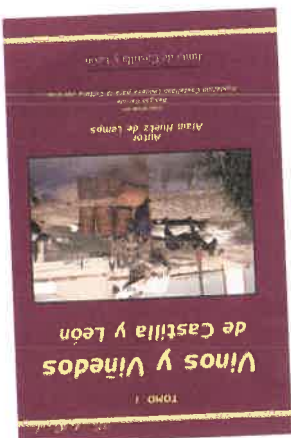
types) is a crop and a spice that has engendered its own

skilful world, economy, way of life, vocabulary and art—in

this case, in the form of those wonderful old-fashioned brightly decorated tins. Jesús

Pérez de Espinardo, a poet, has researched and written

the first detailed book the subject with native passion





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pendium and the introduction is a useful short history of the movement. (Hiria Liburuak S.L., [liburaburu@yahoo.es](mailto:liburaburu@yahoo.es))

**Mis Mejores recetas con aceite de oliva, Mis Mejores recetas con jamón ibérico (My Best Recipes with Olive Oil; My Best Recipes with Iberico Ham)** Recipes with Iberico Ham) Inigo Pérez has pulled off an imaginative new collection of brief ringbound cookbooks aimed at making stylish modern Spanish professional cooking accessible for home kitchens. He chooses a few (32) relatively straightforward recipes for each recipe ward recipes for each recipe them in foolproof step-by-step layouts. The recipes are really excellent (Pérez was Berasategui's first head chef). Check out the web site to download samples. Recommended for hands-on cooks. (Nowlits Gastronomia, [www.mismejoresrecetas.com](http://www.mismejoresrecetas.com))

**PRODUCE AND FOODS**

**De seias y recetas (Of Wild Mushrooms and their Recipes—Tastes of the Countryside)** This sponsored book, originally designed as a company gift, is not yet available for sale, but one excellent might be. It is an excellent trilingual overview—the texts run in English, Basque and Spanish—by Iñaki Iñaki Iñaki Meléndez, who took the excellent photos and wrote the text on the different species, as well as a glossary and bibliography. The company's cooks then set to work on 30 interesting recipes—one example is risotto with Iñaki on cream of sorrel. (Fundación Inasmel, [www.inasmel.es](http://www.inasmel.es))

**The Oxford Book of Health Foods** Although this book fits into the classic illustrated encyclopedic Oxford format, it reveals more about what we don't know than what we do know. The authors—J. Vaughan, Emeritus Professor of Food Sciences at King's College, London, and P.A. Judd, Professor of Nutrition and Dietetics at the University of Central Lancashire—analyze what is known in brief summaries, and include a

and great detail. This is a book that will be much quoted by others, but also deserves reading in its own right. (Turbinto, Sociedad Cultural de Murcia, Tel.: (+34) 968 285 071)

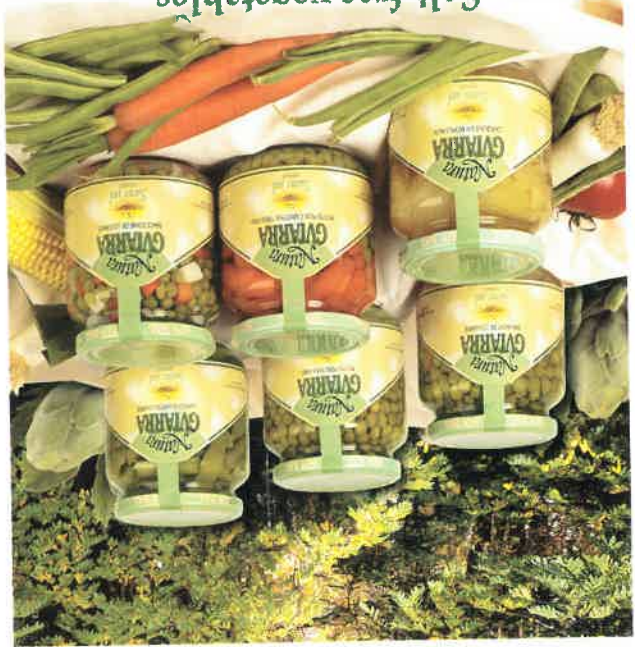
**Historia de la alimentación y de la cocina en el País Vasco (History of Food and Cooking in the Basque Country)** An excellent text history of the Basque Country through its food, which also touches on many other dimensions of life there—society, politics, religion, demography—without ever falling over into excessive patriotism. I found the chapters on modern times riveting, as they help explain so much that one marvels at today, in particular the average Basque's understanding of good eating and the food chain behind that. (Hiria Liburuak S.L., [liburaburu@yahoo.es](mailto:liburaburu@yahoo.es))

**CHEFS' COOKING**

**El bacalao. Las mejores recetas de la cocina vasca y del mundo (Salt-cod. The Best Recipes from Basque and World Cooking)** Good salt-cod can be hard to come by in many areas of the world, but where it is available it inspires gourmet devotion. The Basque Country is one such food culture. This anthology is designed for readers and chefs there, pulling together 195 recipes, mainly collected from Basque chefs, but also drawn from other salt-cod cuisines, ranging from Norwegian to Italian. Some sources are missing, as is an index. (Hiria Liburuak S.L., [liburaburu@yahoo.es](mailto:liburaburu@yahoo.es))

**La cocina vasca de ayer, hoy y mañana (Basque Cooking Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow)** Restaurant critic Rafael García Santos originally published this collection of Basque chefs' recipes in 1986—that is, ten years after the founding of "nueva cocina vasca", or Basque nouvelle cuisine. The creative furor in Basque restaurants at that time is clear from the 750 recipes collected here. Today, of course, things have moved on, but this anthology remains an interesting comparison, but this anthology re-

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## The widest range of vegetables.



Agenda gastronómica de Catalunya (Catalan Castro-nomic Diary) A wonderful di-ary, now in its second year, published within the Catalan governments wider project to promote food tourism. There are sidebars on fiestas and markets and food customs, producers and cooks, recipes and cooking competitions, wines and cheeses and all kinds of other delicious things—and key food events are marked in the diary section. There is a wealth of information here missing from many books on the regions' cuisine.

**Las arroces de casa y otras maravillas** (Home-cooked Rices and Other Marvelous Things) Josep Piera, essayist and poet, distills a lifetime of eating and cooking into this little book about Valencian food. There are few words, perhaps—just 30 short articles

## REGIONAL COOKING

useful reading list, but they there is often insufficient research to make firm assurances. A shame. (Oxford University Press, www.oup.com) **Varietades de olivo culti-vadas en la Comunidad Valenciana** (Olive Varieties Grown in the Valencian Region) This book—with CD Rom—is the result of the most recent detailed regional prospection of olive groves in Spain, a seven-year project. The three authors catalogue 53 of the most important olive varieties found in the eastern Mediterranean region of Valencia (and more on the CD Rom). Significantly, the study concluded that some little known local varieties have considerable future potential. This may sound like tough scientific reading, but the botanical photographs have a fascination and beauty similar to that of a map of local physical geography, and the rigorous scientific approach to diversity helps you to rethink the subject. (Generalitat Valenciana, Conselleria d'Agricultura, Pesca i Alimentació, llig.llibreria@gva.es)

and some 20 recipes—but they capture the knowledge of local ingredients, the traditional annual rhythm of dishes and the frugal but generous Mediterranean spirit that still marks this regions cooking today. (Ediciones Península, www.peninsulad.com) **La cocina del Quijote** (Quijote's cooking) Originally published in 1993 as a two-part set of books, this amalgam has now reached its third edition. Corrected and slightly enlarged, Lorenzo Díaz text includes new recipes, some of which have been sent in by traditionalists and others (fewer) by the regions handful of chefs renovating from within, most notably Manuel de la Osa and Pepe Rodríguez (see *Spain Gourmet*, tour no. 54). (Alianza Editorial, www.alianzaeditorial.es) **La cocina valenciana** (Valencian cooking) A sweeping overview combining native journalist Emili Piers' outspoken writing, Francesc Jarques' photography and over 100 emblematic recipes from restaurants. Each chapter is thematic—starting with "Raw Ingredients" and ending with "Sweet Things and Ices"—and it breaks down into an illustrated essay, photos with long captions, and then recipes. The emphasis on real-life food is welcome. The social history emphasises poverty as an important factor in shaping the regional cuisine; the dishes may be messy but they are nevertheless beautiful; there are home and professional cooks here, landscapes and produce, mountain and coastal cooking. Recommended. (Algar Editorial, algar@algareditorial.com)

**WINE & OTHER DRINKS**

**El agua en la coctelería del siglo XXI** (Water in 21st Century Cocktail-Making) Over 100 Spanish bartenders were asked to make up new cocktails for this book. The results are mixed, with a few inspired-looking creations (untested by this reviewer) built around Andalusian *fino* or Canarian banana liqueur. By contrast, there are surprisingly few recipes which use





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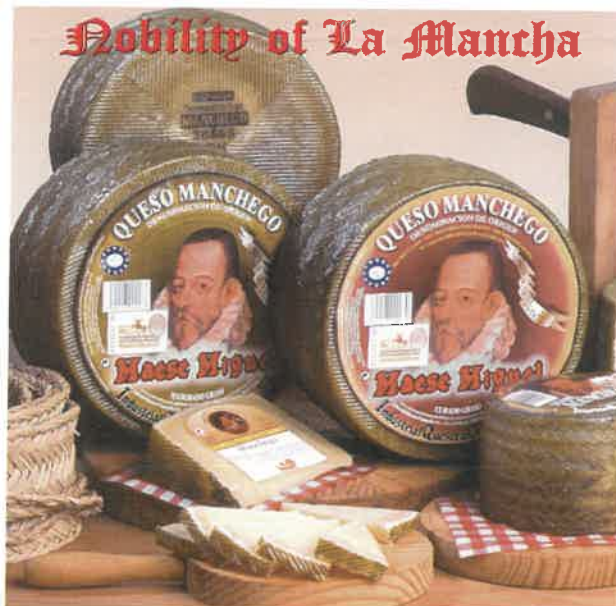


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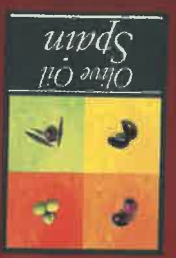
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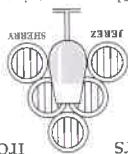
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# GLOSSARY

## Sherry

The aging system for sherry is the *solera* system, which is made up of a number of stages through which the younger wines pass, acquiring the characteristics of the older wines, thus ensuring the continuity of style. The butts (oak casks of 500 liters each) in the earlier stages are known as *criaderas*, and the last and oldest butts in the system are the *solera* stage from which the wine is taken for bottling. The *solera* stage is topped up from the next oldest stage (the first and oldest *criadera*) and that in turn is topped up from the next oldest. There is no stipulated number of stages, but four to six would be the average. No more than 30% of the wine may be removed from the *solera* in any one year.

## Wine Aging Terms

**Crianza.** This term is reserved for wines aged in the wood and bottle for at least two years, six months of which must be in oak casks. (Note: In several regions the minimum time in cask is 12 months.)

**Reserva.** There are two types of standard for the use of this designation. Red wines must age for a minimum of 36 months in the wood and bottle, at least 12 of them in oak casks.

For rose and white wines, the minimum period is 24 months, six of them in oak casks.

**Gran Reserva.** This term is used exclusively for red and claret wines that have aged for at least 24 months in oak casks followed by at least 36 months in the bottle. For white and rose wines, the minimum period is 48 months of which a minimum of six months must be in the wood.

## Notes:

1. Many DOS insist that the oak casks must be no more than 225 liters, however, national legislation allows oak casks up to 1,000 liters.
2. Wines are often kept in vats for a few months prior to aging in casks, so the arithmetic varies for each one.
3. Many bodegas age their wines for more than the stipulated minimum periods.

## Cava

This is the Designation of Origin for sparkling wines produced by the traditional method, that is to say, that the secondary fermentation takes place in the same bottle in which it is sold. The cava demarcated region is in several zones, the most important of which is Catalonia. The others are Aragon, Navarre, Rioja, Castile-Leon, Extremadura and Valencia. The Cava Designation should not be confused with other DOS that might be associated with the provinces in which cava is produced. The minimum aging period for cava wines is nine months in the bottle, though many spend between 18 months and three years, and a few up to five years.

## Designation of Origin (DO) and Protected Designation of Origin (PDO)

Designation of Origin is the official Spanish denomination covering products whose raw materials are produced and manufactured within a specific

## Protected Geographic Identification (PGI)

The PGI covers products characterized by a relation to their geographical setting, with the use of certain raw materials, a determined method of production and/or manufacturing, but differs from a PDO in that these three factors do not necessarily have to coincide.

Each DO, DOCA, PDO or IGP is managed by a Consejo Regulador (CR) or Regulatory Council, which sees to the enforcement of the regulations.

The price of the grapes used in winemaking must be greater than 200% of the national average price. Only wines bottled exclusively at the original wineries will be sold. At least 90% of the vineyard dedicated to winemaking must be inscribed in the registry of DOCA wines; and in the registry of wineries, it must be stipulated that these carry out at least 90% of the wine production within the geographical unit.

Quality control of the wines must be carried out by the regulatory council, batch by batch and with a volume less than or equal to 1,000 hectoliters per batch.

## Qualified Designation of Origin (DOCA)

A DOCA is a Designation of Origin that fulfills the strictest requirements, among which should be highlighted the following: The price of the grapes used in winemaking must be greater than 200% of the national average price. Only wines bottled exclusively at the original wineries will be sold. At least 90% of the vineyard dedicated to winemaking must be inscribed in the registry of DOCA wines; and in the registry of wineries, it must be stipulated that these carry out at least 90% of the wine production within the geographical unit.

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